

THE ARCHITECTS NEWSPAPER

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Moss' proposal for 1020 Venice Boulevard.

COURTESY ERIC OWEN MOSS ARCHITECTS

WITH WEST HOLLYWOOD HOTEL APPROVED, ERIC OWEN MOSS AIMS FOR MORE THAN THE MAX ON LINCOLN BOULEVARD

Venice Snag

After successfully receiving de facto approval for a major hotel on the Sunset Strip, Los Angeles architect Eric Owen Moss is experiencing a bumpy ride in Venice, where he's seeking consent to build 35 feet higher than current planning standards. The architect is fresh off an August 6 victory in West Hollywood, **continued on page 9**



ALLAN FERGUSON

OPPONENTS ATTACK DENSITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF NEW DOWNTOWN PLAN

BERKELEY BRAWL

Local zoning plans usually don't attract much attention from locals. But in Berkeley, where politics is a contact sport, the city's new downtown plan—its first since 1990—has pitted city council members against each other and has thousands of residents choosing sides.

In mid-July, the council approved the new plan by a vote of **continued on page 4**

LOOK OUT

AN EXAMINES THE EVOLVING FIELD OF PHOTOVOLTAIC GLASS, PLUS A SPECIAL PRODUCT SECTION ON THE LATEST MOVEABLE WALLS. PAGES 14-18

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NEW LOCATION FOR BROAD'S ART MUSEUM SOUGHT

UP IN THE AIR

Eli Broad's effort to build a new museum on the corner of Wilshire and Santa Monica boulevards in Beverly Hills may be all but dead. Sources close to the project have told AN that the billionaire art collector is looking elsewhere. Meanwhile, the Broad Art Foundation, **continued on page 3**

DEVELOPER AND PUGH + SCARPA PART WAYS



COURTESY PUGH + SCARPA

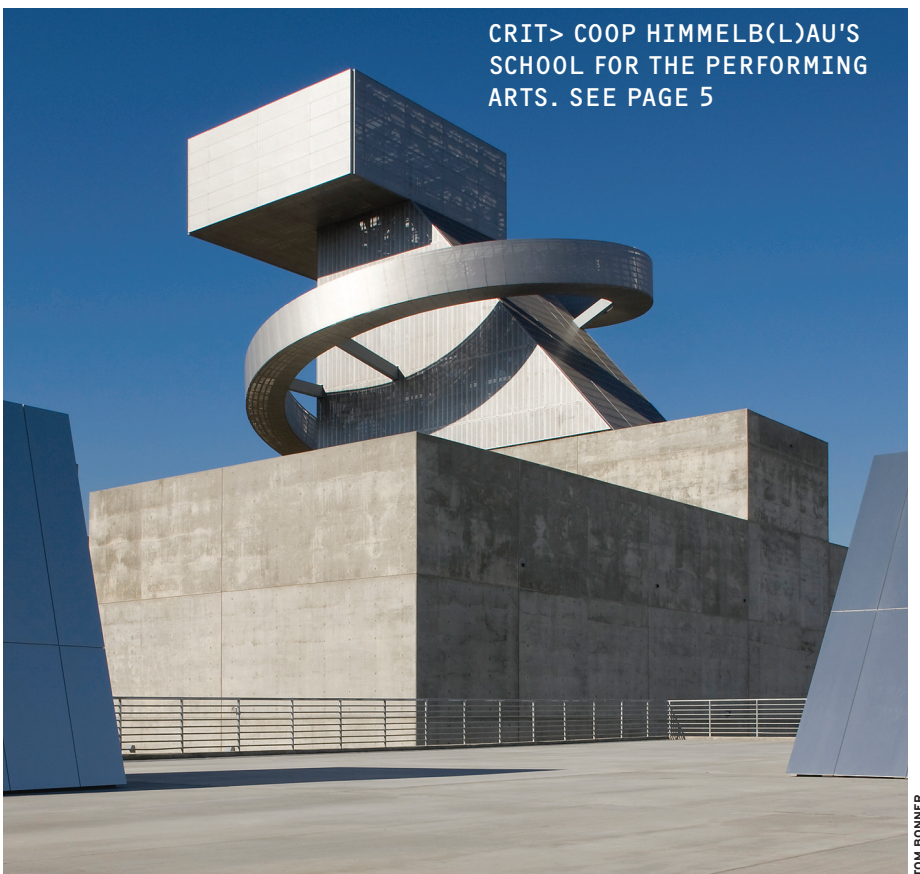
The 104-unit Fuller lofts.

When work began in 2002, Santa Monica firm Pugh + Scarpa's Fuller Lofts was seen as a major coup for LA. The 104-unit project, built out of a 1920s cast-in-place concrete Fuller Paints warehouse in Lincoln Heights, included 50 percent affordable housing and was considered the flagship project for Livable Places, a nonprofit affordable-housing developer cofounded by Pugh + Scarpa principal Larry Scarpa and other major players.

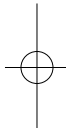
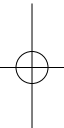
But the project has been plagued **continued on page 10**

STALEMATE

CRIT> COOP HIMMELB(L)AU'S SCHOOL FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS. SEE PAGE 5



TOM BONNER



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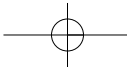
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CALIFORNIA DREAMIN'

In a recent *New York Times* article, Nicolai Ouroussoff argues that the New York Five—Peter Eisenman, Charles Gwathmey, Michael Graves, Richard Meier, and John Hejduk—rose to prominence in the 1970s when New York “was beginning to close itself off to innovative architecture.” Though the critic allows that New York could then still claim to be the country’s center of architectural thought, he suggests that the Five created out of that era’s vibrant culture “the last heroic period in New York architecture.”

In his story, titled “As Heroes Disappear, the City Needs More,” Ouroussoff goes on to reassert—with very little evidence—an often repeated claim. In the subsequent decades, he writes, “The country’s creative energy shifted westward, to Los Angeles, whose vibrant mix of urban grit and nature, abundance of relatively cheap land and lack of confining historical traditions allowed architects to experiment with a freedom that had become virtually impossible in New York.” California’s supposed freedom produced architects like Michael Maltzan, Kevin Daly, and Chris Genik, a cadre of talent, Ouroussoff says, with “no real equivalent in New York.”

However important these architects may be—clearly, like many other LA architects of their generation, they do impressive work—to suggest that New York has no comparable talent is absurd. Ouroussoff, long an admirer of Southern California architecture, turns even an article on the New York Five into an exercise in promoting LA’s “creative energy” and decrying New York’s dearth of “innovative architecture.” His claim that the most important contemporary works to rise in New York over the past decade were designed not by New Yorkers but by Angelenos (Thom Mayne, Frank Gehry), a Japanese woman (Kazuyo Sejima of SANAA), and a Frenchman (Nouvel) might actually be seen as a vote for the city’s confidence, strength, and openness—not something to be condemned.

But more consequentially, using a discussion of the New York Five to argue that the city has closed itself off to innovative architecture is simply wrong-headed. For example, when the New York Five first appeared in 1967 at an Arthur Drexler—curated exhibition at MoMA, they had just emerged from East Coast universities and built only a few private houses. It was New York’s architecture media infrastructure (magazines, publishers, museums, galleries, and critics) that created the group, and it is frankly still without parallel in this country. In addition, the educational institutions in New York’s East Coast orbit, from whence came the Five, were and are still the most important in the world. These institutions educate and support architects with teaching positions at the highest level—including nearly every LA architect of any importance. Due in part to this unrivaled critical mass, the level of discourse, critique, and even experiment in New York can hardly be called staid. The type of architectural thinking that produced plans for the High Line and Fresh Kills landfill, to name only two recent New York projects, could only have come out of the East Coast architecture hopper.

The *Times* article concludes that in New York, “Real change will first demand a radical shift in our cultural priorities. Politicians will have to embrace the cosmopolitanism that was once the city’s core identity.” Yet a recent trip to Los Angeles to look at the city’s new high schools, including Coop Himmelb(l)au’s new Central Los Angeles High School, makes it seem that it is the politicians in that city that have something to learn. They are creating gigantic new school buildings that despite their acclaimed architecture are as misguided about the direction of urban education toward small, intimate learning environments as anything in recent memory. In fact, it is in New York where design-savvy administrators like David Burney at the DDC and Janette Sadik-Khan at the DOT are creating new models of cosmopolitanism right under the nose of those who want to believe that “nothing has come out of New York in decades.” **WILLIAM MENKING**

UP IN THE AIR continued from front page which was asked to submit specific plans to the Beverly Hills Planning Division for an upcoming environmental impact review (EIR), has not communicated with the department since late April.

If built, the project would be located on one or two parcels of a proposed three-acre commercial-and-retail project called the Gateway, planned for a narrow strip of land once reserved for a rail right-of-way. The developers of the Gateway are listed in the draft EIR (released late last year) as Roxbury Managers, Wilco LLC, and M2B2 LLC. Earlier this year, Broad expressed interest in becoming part of the Gateway project, submitting a formal letter to the Planning Division. It remains unclear why he may have split from the project, as the site lies between some of Beverly Hills’ most prominent landmarks, including the Beverly Hilton and Peninsula hotels and the old CCA headquarters, I.M. Pei’s first West Coast commission.

Broad had been working with Gensler’s Marty Borko to develop a plan for a project to build a permanent home for the Broad Collections, which contains over 2,000 artworks. Broad also wants to house a research and study center, as well as the foundation’s administrative headquarters. The foundation currently uses an old art deco building miles down the road in Santa Monica. It houses offices and a gallery, which is only open by reservation and too small for the sorts of exhibitions Broad has said he would like to host. Borko did not return calls seeking comment.

Architects on the shortlist for the new project include Thom Mayne’s Morphosis, Jean Nouvel, Shigeru Ban, Rafael Viñoly, and Christian de Portzamparc. It would be separate from Broad’s two other museums, one at LACMA designed by Renzo Piano that opened last year and the other at his alma mater, Michigan State University, designed by Zaha Hadid that will break ground next spring.

One source said that Broad still wants the project to go forward somewhere else, although Erica Lepping, communications director for the Broad Foundation, told *AN*, “We have no new information to report.” Either way, until the formal EIR for the Gateway project is released in September, the possibility of Broad still joining the Gateway is not completely off the table. **SAM LUBELL**

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LETTERS

KEEP ON KEEPIN’ ON

In response to Michael Webb’s “Why LA Needs a Compelling Showcase for Architecture” (*CAN* 05_07.15.2009), the news of the A+D Museum finding a home on Wilshire is certainly good to hear. The program of design exhibitions at MoCA, both recent and recently cancelled, however, has made a place that started off so well (with the magnificent Case Study Houses exhibition of distant memory) seem somewhat predictable (exhibits of Gehry and Mayne). The likely adventurousness that a smaller gallery can generate is perhaps more exciting, and better representative of the city’s energy than MoCA’s display of local boys who made it. (But if you want to learn something about either then take a bus to Gehry’s Disney

Concert Hall or Mayne’s Caltrans.)

I would guess that curator Brooke Hodge’s more provocative ideas for exhibits at MoCA were shot down by the higher-ups, leaving only crowd-pleasers. The equivalent shows of local artists—Ruscha, Baldessari, Irwin—were done back in the day when they were just West Coast artists laboring in obscurity. While the painting department has now moved on to shows of delightful, more obscure 1960s New York and younger European artists, why not the architecture department? This is where Webb rightly points out that the Hammer and the Getty have both done outstanding jobs filling in historical gaps. But from the major contemporary architecture departments in the city, where are the exhibits comparable to Ambasz’s on Italian ‘60s design or

Bergdoll’s recent prefab housing show, both at MoMA? Where is a review of new California transportation projects? Or how about a weekend program tied to the latest Westside shape-making craze in nonlethal rapid prototyping for the toddler set?

Rizzoli picked up the architect’s monograph business from the Japanese in the 1980s and ran with it, providing the imprimatur of a large publishing house to the next generation of architects: They were exhibit catalogues without the exhibit and, gosh, they made nice office brochures. The tide seems to have turned and institutions are searching for a similar way to get the big guys to show up for an evening and add a little excitement. The evidence suggests that we might not be ready for a big design department in a muse-

um that lacks the wherewithal to examine uncharted territory.

So let the A+D do some guerrilla curatorial work and the Hammer and the Getty continue their terrific shows for now. When MoCA gets back on its feet again perhaps they, and their supporters, can avoid the insularity of their recent past. The place is starting to feel a little like a rock & roll museum in Liverpool. **TOM NOHR, PASADENA**

CORRECTION

We wrote of a slight heard at a SCI-Arc event in last month’s “Eavesdrop” (*CAN* 06_08.19.2009). Upon reviewing the transcript of a panel attended by critic Jeff Kipnis and architect Eric Owen Moss, it seems no such comments were recorded.



FARSHID ASSASSI

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Edward Cella Art + Architecture is a welcome addition to LA's Museum Row at 6018 Wilshire Boulevard, across from LACMA. Relocated from Santa Barbara, Cella recently moved into the storefront gallery designed by Lisa Landworth of Landworth Debolske Associates. It's twice the size of his former space; the 2,000 square feet are broken up into three rooms, each with its own character. The front draws north light from the street, the middle has a skylight, and the small back room has low tungsten lighting for the display of drawings. "I was attracted by the clarity of Lisa's design and the high quality of construction," said Cella. To give it a distinctive signature, he commissioned a two-person workstation with built-in storage from Ball-Nogues Studio. They created a sculptured block of industrially-cut laminated cardboard, drawing on their Rip Curl Canyon installation at Rice University and a temporary display of Frank Gehry's jewelry for Tiffany's. Cella is presenting a major exhibition of architects' drawings through October 10. **MICHAEL WEBB**

BRINGING SEXY BACK

Johnston Marklee was already one of the hippest architecture firms in LA. But now they've catapulted several spots up the ranks. How, you ask? By designing new stores for **Justin Timberlake's** clothing brand, William Rast, that's how. The firm has already designed pop-up stores in London, Paris, and New York (to a chorus of screaming girls when Timberlake came by) and is designing more in Palm Springs and San Jose. And in November the firm will open the brand's flagship store in the Century City Westfield Mall. The architects haven't met Timberlake yet, but will finally see him at the Century City opening. "I hear he's very nice," said principal **Sharon Johnston**, coyly concealing any desire to start screaming and desperately trying to rock JT's body, as she darn well should.

GERBIL CHATEAU

Speaking of important celebrity news, we hear from the most reliable gossip source we know, Britain's *Sun*, that architecture fanatic **Brad Pitt** spent \$82,000 building a house and racetrack for his kids' gerbils at his estate in the south of France. According to the authoritative story, the complex includes "a maze of tunnels, seesaws and platforms." French gerbils. Brad Pitt. A racetrack. Mon dieu. We can't make this stuff up.

HOME TOUR HICCUPS

AIA home tours are always an adventure, but rarely do they produce as much drama as the AIA SF's fall home tour did in September. First, SB Architects' Alabama Street residence ran out of money just prior to finishing up, so the firm reportedly worked out a deal with furniture store Room & Board, producing a staged effect that looked more like a showroom than a real house. There was also a last-minute switch in the itinerary when a loft in the Oriental Warehouse by Edmonds + Lee ended up with major water damage from a leak next door. The project was replaced by Cary Bernstein's Liberty Street Residence. Perhaps getting your home on the AIA's tour has become like the *Sports Illustrated* cover jinx? Beware, all you tour-aspiring architects.

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BERKELEY BRAWL continued from front page 7-2, which would bring taller buildings and more housing and jobs to the center of town. After four years and over 150 public meetings spent hashing out the details, the plan looked like a winner. But shortly after it was passed, the two dissenting councilmembers kicked off a signature drive to let the public "vote" with the hope of overturning the plan. They had until August 20 to collect signatures from at least 5,558 Berkeley voters (ten percent of the rolls) to force the city council to take a second look at the plan.

"As progressive as Berkeley is, there's always some resistance to change," said Matthew Taecker, the city planner in charge of the plan. By August 21, the city clerk had counted 9,200 signatures, and now the county registrar has a month to validate them. If there are enough, the city council will have to rescind the plan, call a special election, or place it on the ballot for the next scheduled election in June 2010. A special election is unlikely, Berkeley Mayor Tom Bates said, because it would cost the city an unaffordable \$200,000.

But if the opposition is right, Bates had better be preparing for action. "We feel pretty confident we'll be successful," said Anthony Sanchez, spokesman for councilmember Jesse Arreguin, who voted against the plan. Councilmembers Arreguin and Kriss Worthington voted against it because it didn't set aside enough units for affordable housing, and allowed a larger number of taller buildings to be built.

The plan requires that 20 percent of all housing units built downtown be affordable, not 25 percent as Arreguin and Worthington had hoped. They also charge that developers can waive the sustainable and community benefits they would otherwise be forced to include under the existing plan.

Taecker said that all new buildings would

be required to meet LEED Gold standards or higher. As for the affordable housing, he said there was only so much the market could bear, especially during a downturn. Furthermore, the inclusionary housing bonus is already set to 20 percent citywide, and changing that standard could drive development out of the very areas in which the plan is attempting to encourage it. "Five percent of nothing is still nothing," Taecker said. He also suggested that many of the petitioners were concerned with height more than anything else.

If the referendum goes down in defeat, the plan will go into effect immediately. As passed, it allows developers to put up eight buildings of 100 feet to 225 feet in height. The city now caps building heights at 85 feet, although there are variances for affordable housing and sustainability inclusions. The plan also calls for the creation of large public open spaces, called "park blocks," and for smaller plazas; the modification of streets to top out car speeds at 25 miles per hour; and the further promotion of retail space downtown. New development fees would go to open space creation, landscaping, tree planting, and new street signs.

Given past history, even if the referendum passes, it may not succeed with voters. Seven years ago, a measure to reduce building heights along major streets failed in a citywide vote by 80 percent.

Bates has also threatened to sue the two council members if the referendum passes. While he has yet to meet with the city's legal team, he is concerned that the wording of the referendum was deliberately misleading and did not accurately describe the zoning plan. "It seemed to us unreasonable that two people could circumvent the will of hundreds of people and years of meetings," Bates said. "We have a really great plan, and it's sad to see this hiccup." **KRISTINA SHEVORY**

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Clockwise from top: Theater and classroom buildings; the cone-shaped library and the Tatlin-like main tower; the stairs and steel beams dominate the theater lobby; large round windows add a sense of playfulness and frame views.

that winds around the tower, the viewing platform would have made the campus a seat of imagination to rival the Observatory and City Hall. School officials, however, objected on various grounds, and all that remains of Prix's scheme is a latticework of steel so dense as to be impenetrable. And although from almost any vantage the tower and ramp look complete, the ramp itself never touches the ground nor reaches the window in the sky.

So much of the design's energy is devoted to functionless forms that fundamentally, the school buildings are intended to be experienced from the outside. Once inside, things begin to take on a prosaic, almost barracks-like quality. You can't help but feel that the out-of-orbit exterior forced the interior to succumb to the typical, highly structured, restrictive blankness that Prix himself decries in school architecture. The classrooms feel confined and airless despite the large windows, and the cafeteria, regardless of its light shafts, is cave-like.

But it is the theater lobby—itsself a kind of marquee leaning out toward Grand Avenue in a genuine effort to embrace the public—that thoroughly undermines the effort to connect art to the wider community. Prix speaks eloquently about how “big volumes are liberating and generous,” and the lobby is meant as such. Yet in leaving the steel framing exposed and cladding the walls, ceilings, and staircase balusters in heavy-gauge metal, all sense of generosity is inverted. The metalwork, far from liberating, invokes the omnipotence of prison walls. Back in the 1970s, LAUSD hired the town's jail architect to build schools.

Somehow that spirit has come to inhabit this project, whose outward gestures clearly express a yearning to be free. **GREG GOLDIN**

The Los Angeles Unified School District's (LAUSD) Central Los Angeles Area High School #9 for the Visual and Performing Arts, which opened on September 9, is a building destined for infamy—and this probably suits its avowedly radical designer, Wolf D. Prix, just fine. The collection of large geometric shapes tilted and torqued like distorted chess pieces, reminiscent of a Russian Constructivist dream, is a powerful waking vision to drivers whistling past on the adjacent 101 freeway, and to denizens strolling Grand Avenue on a night out at Walt Disney Concert Hall or the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion.

Prix's firm, Coop Himmelb(l)au, was brought in by the city's self-appointed civic czar and reigning arts patron, Eli Broad, to transform an early, no-frills plan for a school into a signature campus for the arts. The school occupies a strategic site at the north end of Grand Avenue, LA's cultural spine. Broad, who was instrumental in getting Disney Hall completed and

has since goaded state, county, and city officials into backing the recession-wracked Grand Avenue commercial development, apparently could not abide a conventional building at the top of the boulevard he has spent more than a decade remaking.

Enter Coop Himmelb(l)au. Suddenly, the budget nearly doubled from \$87 million to \$172 million. The series of low-slung buildings was replaced by a 1,000-seat theater, a cone-shaped library, and a soaring metal tower encircled by a helix ramp that would be the envy of any skateboard crew. The cone, which lists to one side, is clad in bead-blasted stainless steel tiles, arranged in a single, continuous climbing spiral, like fish scales. The four classroom “academies,” simple orthogonal boxes, are punched with enormous round portholes that defeat any sense of scale. The cafeteria, a bunker carved into a hillside, is penetrated by rectangular light shafts that pierce the thick roof and seem to caper

this way and that.

Prix said, “We designed an icon for an art school without referring to Gehry's hall, or Isozaki's museum, or Moneo's cathedral. It is just another icon in the area, which you could say is seemingly senseless, but then what is art?” The tower, he said frankly, is a billboard, a “supportive gesture to the arts.” He added, “By giving volumes readable, identifiable shapes, I hope the students will take ownership of the buildings, as opposed to Paris, where students burned the schools and public spaces because they were anonymous.”

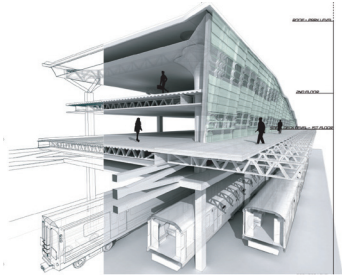
Prix carries on in the spirit of the European students' and workers' rebellion of 1968—the year he co-founded his practice, whose English translation is “sky blue” or “heaven construction.” He is unabashedly thumbing his nose at the establishment, and there is no better evidence of this than the 140-foot-tall tower that rises above the flyloft of the theater. Inspired by Vladimir Tatlin's

unrealized 400-meter-tall Monument to the 3rd International, Prix's tower is intended to grab a piece of the city's skyline and stand shoulder-to-shoulder with the cathedral bell tower directly across the freeway. As originally conceived, Prix's tower would have been taller than the cathedral, but then word came from Moneo's office that this would not be tolerated, so the school's tower was built three feet shorter than its nonsecular cousin. Prix calls the rivals “Beauty and the Beast.” Could there be a more direct challenge to the preeminence of religion at the core of a city than a tower consecrated to the speculative, provocative power of art?

Alas, the imagery is stronger than the reality. In Prix's original design, the tower was supposed to be surmounted by an observation room, not unlike the one Herzog & de Meuron built for the de Young Museum in San Francisco's Golden Gate Park. Intended as a public space to be reached via the snaking ramp



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Grab A Seat

One of San Francisco's newest parks measures just 7,000 square feet. It's a simple affair: a few sets of cafe tables and chairs with a row of bollards and planters separating it from a busy intersection. Thanks to the city's new Pavements-to-Parks initiative, in May this temporary pedestrian plaza replaced a two-way street, where 17th Street intersects with Castro and Market. Two more such plazas, in the Mission and Potrero Hill, are scheduled to open by the end of September.

There are plenty of reasons to cheer for this step on the path to a more pedestrian-friendly city. But what makes these parks truly remarkable are the fast-track way in which they were created—a highly visible experiment in urban planning, where the community can test-drive the design and provide input before it becomes permanent. It took only a few months to get sign-off on the plaza design and three days to install it. Design services were supplied pro-bono by the firm Public Architecture, labor was provided by the Department of Public Works, and all materials were donated. The bollards are cardboard concrete molds, lined with plastic and planted with palms and flowers, and the asphalt was painted tan to distinguish it from the street.

It's a refreshing shift from standard operating procedure, where discord among constituents and difficulties in securing funds can bog down public projects for years. "By implementing a site and allowing the space to be the laboratory, you don't have to try and get everything right from day one," said Andres Power, project manager for the initiative and an urban designer in the city's planning department. "The model is to be very creative in how we pull together resources and materials—there's very little capital expense. It's a great way to show that we can make a difference very easily."

San Francisco is the second major city to try this approach after New York's pioneering foray in 2007, where 31 temporary plazas are currently in the pipeline. New York transportation commissioner Janette Sadik-Khan

masterminded the project and in a talk last year galvanized Ed Reiskin, who heads San Francisco's department of public works. Based on the response to the first park, he's ready to declare a success. "People are requesting more plazas, we have architecture firms clamoring to partner with us for free, we have some corporate sponsors—these are all good signs," said Reiskin.

San Francisco's planning department, which is managing the program, is now reviewing a list of 25 to 30 sites that meet the five criteria set by the initiative: a stretch of underutilized road, a lack of nearby public space, community interest, the ability to improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety, public attractions like cafes, and a neighborhood steward willing to keep an eye on things.

San Francisco's happy twist on New York's program has been to bring in individual design firms to tackle each park, showcasing creative energy when there is little budget. Local architect Jane Martin, best known for making it easier and cheaper to take a jackhammer to a sidewalk in order to create a garden, used fallen trees from Golden Gate Park in her design of Guerrero Park in the Mission—a symbolic link between the start of one park to another. And for "Showplace Triangle" in Potrero Hill, San Francisco design firm Rebar decided to co-opt the iconography of the road, using turn-lane arrows to generate a mosaic-like pattern. The firm has its own inspired pavements-to-parks effort: PARK(ing) Day, in which urban activists temporarily take over parking spaces to create tiny public parks for a day. The event just celebrated its fourth year on September 18. Since its inception, PARK(ing) Day has grown into a worldwide phenomenon, with large-scale efforts in LA, Portland, and Seattle as well.

"There's a whole movement of interim use as a way of activating urban spaces," said John Bela of Rebar. "We're circumventing the traditional planning processes and showing what's the minimum infrastructure required to turn these sites into beautiful public places." **LYDIA LEE**

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BILLBOARD BAN LEAVES ARCHITECTS IN LIMBO

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Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood.

SAM LUBELL

In August, the Los Angeles city council unanimously approved an

emergency ordinance to prohibit new digital billboards, multistory

supergraphics, and some freeway-facing signs. The move was enacted to prevent the city's current "Interim Control Ordinance" (ICO), which temporarily bans new outdoor advertising, from being struck down in a court challenge.

But the emergency measure creates more ambiguity for developers and architects as they wait for the issue to be settled. "It resolves uncertainties for the city, but creates more for architects and developers," said Paul Rohrer, an attorney at Manatt, Phelps & Phillips who represents several developers.

For the past year, the city council has been working to develop new rules for billboard advertising that will stand up against legal challenges. In the meantime, the city has continued to pass temporary moratoriums as stopgap measures. The most recent temporary ban was challenged in court by Liberty Media Group, which claimed the ICO violated several California codes, and argued that the city had prevented Liberty Media from obtaining permits to erect supergraphics while issuing permits to other media companies and developers. The case was scheduled for a hearing before a federal judge on August 17, but has now been postponed to consider the new ordinance's effect on the case.

The council feared that if the ban were to be defeated, billboard companies would overrun the city

with applications for new signs.

The unanimous vote represents an about-face for Seventh District Councilmember Richard Alarcón, who had previously called for a law that would allow councilmembers to coordinate sign swaps that would remove some signs in exchange for allowing new digital signs.

The continued delays for a comprehensive sign ordinance have frustrated architects and developers. In March, the City Planning Commission recommended a different ordinance to the city council that included plans for 21 "sign districts," including Hollywood, Universal City, Westchester, and Boyle Heights. The latest emergency measure essentially nullifies such special-use districts. Large development projects in proposed sign districts that have gotten entitlements for off-site advertising signs but have not yet gotten building permits are now out of luck, since the city will no longer issue permits for new billboard types included in the ban.

According to Derek Ryder, a member of the AIA/LA Ad-Hoc Sign Committee and principal at the architecture firm Alias Designs, the ongoing legal wrangling and emergency bans are taking a toll on architects. The uncertainty around sign regulation means architects and developers "are unable to finalize their designs or pro-formas, and may be choosing to extend submit-

tal dates for projects just to know which way the city council will go on this issue," said Ryder.

Rohrer, citing the legal challenges presented by billboard company World Wide Rush against the city's temporary ICO, in addition to the Liberty Media court case, echoed Ryder's concerns. "The uncertainty hurts architects by discouraging development," he said, adding that the more critical issue is enforcement. "If the city isn't properly enforcing the laws they have, passing new laws doesn't help." For his part, anti-billboard activist Dennis Hathaway of the Coalition to Ban Billboard Blight foresees future court challenges to the latest ordinance.

Within the design community, opinions on the issue are split. "For the architects and developers who support digital billboards, a permanent ban would be a setback to the cause of technological expression, freedom of speech, and unfettered commerce," said Ryder. "For proponents of a public space dedicated to the public without the loud, simplistic messages of commerce intruding on your every view down the street, a permanent ban would be a modest step forward in a city already heavily blighted by the excesses of a powerful billboard industry and an auto-centric urbanism."

MARISSA GLUCK

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 30, 2009



Architects, like vines, are challenged by a steep slope and, in both instances, the product is often more interesting than had it been rooted in the flats. As late as the 1940s, plots in the hills around LA were practically free; *Sunset* magazine even gave them away as a premium for new subscribers. Wright, Schindler, and Neutra all created memorable houses in Silverlake and the Hollywood Hills, and Escher Gunewardena Architects have created a worthy addition to that legacy. The three-level house they built for a young couple in Glassell Park is spare, sustainable, and site-specific. It also feels surprisingly spacious for its 2,400 square feet.

The clients chanced

upon the architects 12 years ago, when Joe Sola, a widely exhibited artist and his wife, Erin Wright, first visited their office in Silverlake and were inspired by an array of models. (In the meantime, Sola was hired away from the Gagosian Gallery by Michael Govan to be director of special projects at LACMA.) The design took shape soon after they found the site in 2000, but delays in financing and securing permits pushed construction to 2007-2008. Throughout the nine years of gestation, the basic concept remained unchanged: three rectangular forms loosely stacked one atop the other. A garage-studio occupies the base, bedrooms and a linear gallery are at mid-level, and the upper level is an open-plan living-dining-kitchen. The north-south orientation was determined by the need for access and parking at the end of a sloping street. Recessed glass sliders at either end frame contrasting views, up to a nature preserve and down to a neighborhood of small, detached houses.

Engineer Andrew Nasser, who worked with John Lautner in his later years, devised an economical solution for the retaining walls to generate three 12-

foot-high stepped terraces. This allowed the house to be built as a type-5 wood-frame structure without caissons. The three volumes of the house form a cubist block that is shrink-wrapped in white Sarnafil, an inexpensive and durable thermo-plastic membrane developed in Switzerland. Sheets of this material were heat-welded to create a taut skin that unifies the composition and provides good insulation. It's a technology that the European pioneers, struggling to create purist structures in northern climes, would have embraced with passion.

The interior is also treated as a seamless whole. White walls and ceilings of painted gypsum board complement the white floor, which is covered with an industrial-grade laminate that can easily be washed down. Playing off these white boxes are planes and containers of boldly grained Douglas fir plywood. The stairs that link the three levels are treated as narrow white fissures, with an outer layer of the plywood also used as warm-toned paneling for the master bedroom, sliding screens, and storage closets. The cool rationality of the design is enriched by the contrasts of dark and light,

Clockwise from top: Three floors are stacked off-center, allowing for varied views; light pours in through large windows in the upper-floor kitchen; a suspended fireplace in the living room; the house is built into the hillside; interiors are clad in Douglas fir plywood.

of the narrow wood-lined spine on the second floor and the luminous expanses of the living areas above. There, two storage blocks, a kitchen island of white Corian, and lacquered cabinets float free within the void. It is architecture as a minimalist artwork that comfortably accommodates a collection of works on paper (protected from glare by roll-down blinds) and an eclectic mix of plain and vintage furniture.

Still to come is the landscaping that will bind the house to the native trees, shrubs and grasses that flank it on two sites. The owners were able to purchase a double lot, which should ensure that their immediate neighbor will be designed to the same high standard as their own house and, hopefully, engage it in a creative dialogue. In a land-hungry city, that's an ideal that is rarely achieved and it will provide an even greater challenge for an architect than did the original bare site. **MW**



JONAS LARA



COURTESY FREDERICK FISHER AND PARTNERS

UNVEILED

STURT HAAGA GALLERY AT THE DESCANSO GARDENS

Flush with a private donation of \$2.1 million, the Descanso Gardens recently announced groundbreaking on the Sturt Haaga Gallery of Art, a new LEED Silver-certified art gallery and exhibition space meant to showcase locally and nationally produced art in one of Los Angeles' only public gardens.

Funded entirely by Heather Sturt Haaga and Paul Haaga, Jr., whose donation is the largest in the history of Descanso, the 2,800-square-foot gallery complex will

make use of an existing structure, once used as the garage for Descanso's founder, E. Manchester Boddy. It will include several new-build structures designed by LA-based Frederick Fisher and Partners.

The design includes two exhibition spaces to be created within the existing structure, and a new 1,300-square-foot gallery to be built into a hillside adjacent to the former garage. The design incorporates both vertical gardens and roof gardens to create visual connections between the setting and the new structure.

"We wanted to respect the structure that was already there," said Fisher of his

design, "and yet add to it, resulting in a structure of the level of quality of an exhibition space that one would do from scratch."

The mission, said David Brown, executive director of Descanso, will be to inspire a new appreciation of nature through visual arts. He added that the gallery plans to invite artists to come to the Gardens to exhibit their work in solo shows, group shows, and thematically-curated exhibitions.

JAKE TOWNSEND

Architect: [Frederick Fisher and Partners](#)
Location: [Descanso Gardens; La Cañada Flintridge, CA](#)
Construction: [2010](#)

VENICE SNAG continued from front page where the planning commission overruled the city's planning staff and gave the nod to an 11-story hotel and adjoining condo complex, set for a site at the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Doheny Drive. The hotel will feature Moss' typical off-kilter floor plates, and will have a glazed curtain wall set with floating steel panels. Its smaller residential block will be set around small public and private courtyards. The planning department had recommended denial for a project height that greatly exceeded the residential street's height limits and an FAR of 4.07, the highest approved since West Hollywood was founded in 1984. The approval brings valuable transit occupancy taxes from its hotel component and time-share units.

For the Venice project, located at the corner of two of the city's busiest streets, Lincoln and Venice boulevards, Moss has proposed that 5,000 square feet of first-floor commercial and 40 apartment units fit into a tight 120-by-125-foot site with an enclosed V-shaped plan.

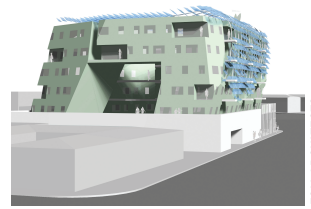
Moss told *AN* that plans

for the mixed-use project may be revisited in light of community opposition. In June, the Venice Neighborhood Council recommended that the City of Los Angeles deny the myriad variances sought by the developer for 1020 Venice Boulevard. Moss was non-committal as to the extent of those changes. In addition to its height, residents—who are some of the most effective land-use activists in the city—disagree with a requested zone change that would double the density currently allowed for the site.

Lincoln Boulevard is a major Westside transit artery, and, according to Moss, the design philosophy stemmed from the placement of high-density housing near transit—especially since light rail is on the horizon for Santa Monica and Culver City.

Outspoken as ever, the architect lambasted the "arcane advising process," in which community groups have planning input. He cited his project as a case where the good of the larger city took precedence over individuals in neighborhoods.

He suggested an entitlement scenario in which, regardless



EDM ARCHITECTS

of the community's position, the city planning commission and city council could make decisions on a broader perspective.

"You can never make a coherent, citywide policy if you poll every neighborhood resident," Moss told *AN*. "You have to sustain a point of view."

But Venice-based land-use activist David Ewing disagreed. "The reason for planning is to impose a larger perspective," Ewing said. "[Moss] sets himself up as the adult in the room, as the only one who sees the greater good, and the greater good just happens to be particularly good for Eric Owen Moss."

While project developer Valley Heart Group LLC has filed an application with the city, at press time a hearing date for the project had not been set by the City of Los Angeles Planning Department.

TIBBY ROTHMAN



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While the MRED curriculum is always evolving to meet the needs of students, the structure remains constant: fundamentals matter and USC MRED graduates leave the program with the tools and knowledge required to meet market conditions, whatever they may be.

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THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 30, 2009

MIA LEHRER AND ASSOCIATES: FARM ON WHEELS



IM STUDIO MI/LOS ANGELES: THE NEW CITY CENTER OF URBAN FARMING



BCV ARCHITECTS: THE URBAN FIELD FARM STOP



MICHAEL K. LEUNG: HYDROPONIC FARM(ERS MARKET)



COURTESY RESPECTIVE DESIGNERS

COMPETITION TO REDESIGN FARMERS' MARKETS GETS FRESH FEEDBACK

RIPE IDEAS

A multi-level bus stop that not only serves mass-transit users but doubles as a produce stand; a grocery store planned for a low-income neighborhood where currently fresh fruits and vegetables are all but unattainable; a proposal to rezone vacant city properties for farming uses; and a site-specific volume constructed for harvest fog. Those were just a few of the entries in a design competition dubbed *Redesign Your Farmers' Market*, whose winners were announced on September 2.

Initiated 30 years after the advent of the first farmers' markets in Southern California, the competition asked designers, architects, farmers, chefs, vendors, and shoppers to devise innovative improvements for the

supply chain that delivers produce grown by local farmers to urban residents.

Sponsored by *GOOD* magazine, The Urban & Environmental Policy Institute, CO Architects, The Los Angeles Good Food Network, and *The Architect's Newspaper*, *Redesign Your Farmers' Market* drew 65 entries from countries as far away as Lithuania. The range of concepts was equally far-reaching, from the simple and highly executable—new ideas for structuring booths, small containers to transport produce, or renovations to existing markets—to the sweeping and politically challenging, like Jacob Lang's intricate planning manifesto to rezone underutilized land for farming in

areas where fresh and inexpensive produce is most needed.

Though submissions contemplated multiple avenues of improvement, two trends were evident. The first was the use of school properties as markets/urban farmlands. The second was the reconfiguration of municipal bus lines, subway cars, or trains to convey fresh fruits and vegetables throughout cities.

Ultimately, however, the *Farm on Wheels* concept from Los Angeles-based landscape architecture firm Mia Lehrer and Associates, which revitalized the idea of a centralized market and married it with a neighborhood truck system, won the day. Under the model, local farmers would bring their produce to a centralized Farmers Distribution Market, where staff would either sell foods on site or truck it to neighborhoods around the city.

The jury, composed of farmers' market organizers, journalists, theorists, and farmers, cited Lehrer's proposal for several reasons: for its capability to deliver food across

income and ethnicities; for its keeping small farmers in charge of their own profit levels; for its inclusion of a market component allowing farmers to continue a personal interaction with consumers; and for its sustainable approach. Electric trucks would replace gasoline dinosaurs.

First runner-up was *The New City Center of Urban Farming* by im Studio mi/Los Angeles, which integrated a farm into the Hollywood farmer's market. The second runner-up was San Francisco-based BCV Architects' *The Urban Field Farm Stop*, which suggested building produce stands into bus stops. And *Hydroponic Farm(ers Market)* by San Francisco architect Michael K. Leung was the third runner-up, with an undulating, horizontal form of polypropylene mesh to enclose a hanging farm that literally feeds off fog. The mesh recalls the fleetingness of the fog it is intended to harvest, while creating a promenade for consumers who purchase the fruits of the farm at ground level. **TR**

STALEMATE continued from front page by setbacks, with work stalling in early 2008 after Livable Places disbanded amid the economic downturn and disputes with contractors.

Construction restarted this spring under local developer Lee Homes and its prime lender Citibank, and the project neared completion before grinding once more to a

halt, its architect walking off the job. Scarpa told *AN* that his firm is no longer associated with the project, citing contractual differences with Lee Homes as a major cause of the firm's exit. "We're as off that job as you can be off a job," Scarpa said.

According to the architect, the current impasse began after Lee Homes took over the project,

proffering what he refers to as an "unworkable contract" and walking away from subsequent negotiations. The contract, said Scarpa, gave his firm fifty cents for every dollar it was owed, plus millions of dollars in liability. Scarpa has since refused to hand over project-related documents to the developer.

"It's completely unfair," said

Scarpa. "If they want to get material, they have to come to some agreement. I'm not going to just give the stuff away." Scarpa suspects that the building's affordable units and ground-level retail may both be removed under the new ownership.

Lee Homes did not respond to requests for comment. According to the firm's website, the company

has completed over 1,000 units of housing since 2003, including the Flower Street Lofts in LA, Centre Street Lofts in San Pedro, and Harbor Lofts in Anaheim.

Asked if he would take legal action, Scarpa was stoic. "I can't really do anything," he said. "Architects don't really have that kind of power." **SL**

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NEW COWBOYS STADIUM FULL OF SUPERLATIVES

BIG IN TEXAS



DARYL SHIELDS/HKS

Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones could have renovated the well-loved but worn-out Texas Stadium in suburban Irving, but instead he chose to build a \$1.15 billion monument to his team in Arlington, 20 miles west of Dallas, that may literally change how people view the game of football.

With voters willing to put up \$325 million in sales tax

revenue, Jones broke ground in 2006 on a 140-acre site within earshot of the Texas Rangers' ballpark. Three years later, the Cowboys Stadium, as it's currently being called—no one has paid for naming rights—has opened.

At three million square feet, the venue is the largest stadium in the world, with a roof that is 660,800 square feet and one of the largest

domed structures bar none. Two epic arches create a record-breaking column-free span of 1,225 feet while supporting a retractable roof that soars 292 feet above the playing field. An 86-foot-high glass curtain-wall surface slopes outward at a 14-degree angle. The wall features a fritted glass system that, when illuminated at night, transforms the stadium into

a giant glowing orb.

But the superlatives don't stop there. At both end zones are operable glass doors comprised of five panels, 120 feet high by 180 feet wide, that lend the building an unexpectedly sleek appearance. Within 18 minutes the panels slide open, the roof retracts, and the interior partially opens to create the feeling of an outdoor

stadium. Meanwhile, party spaces abound in luxury suites that go for as much as \$275,000, plus Vegas-style clubs, party platforms, exterior plazas, and concourses where watching the games on one of 3,000 screens is almost an afterthought.

The ensemble is truly enormous, but being "large was secondary," said Mark Williams, principal and project director for HKS Sports and Entertainment Group. The Dallas-based firm won the 2001 design competition by developing a concept based on an analysis of Cowboy brand identity. The HKS team focused on the star power of the Cowboys, but also on the personality of the fans and city. "The stadium needs to be stamped with the DNA [of its surroundings]," he said. "Sports facilities are very meaningful places for people because of the memories associated with them."

That sense of nostalgia could make it difficult for fans who bonded with the 38-year-old Texas Stadium to fully embrace the scale of the new venue and the over-the-top experience it offers: Two high-definition screens running from 20-yard line to 20-

yard line hang 90 feet above the field, flanked by two smaller screens, each 27 feet tall by 48 feet wide. Fans, whether seated in a luxury suite or at the top tier, have unencumbered views more akin to indoor arena seating than to that of a traditional stadium. (Unfortunately, NFL punters have already proven that they can hit the screens as well.)

While the Cowboys originally expressed an interest in going green, announcing in 2008 that they were signing onto the EPA's now-defunct National Environmental Performance Track, HKS did not respond when asked to discuss any sustainable features. If the apparent lack of green bothers Cowboys fans, you wouldn't know it. Less than one year before the stadium opened, the *Dallas News* reported that 85 percent of the 2009 season tickets had been sold. Cowboys fan Steve McPherson voiced the opinion of many when he said that the new stadium "doesn't really matter to me, but I'll probably make it to one game this season. I am interested in seeing those big screens." **ALLISON MILIONIS**

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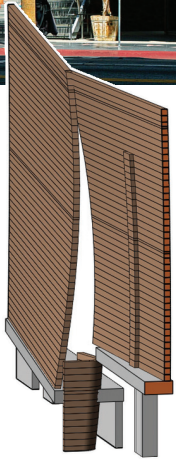
Madame Tussauds Hollywood Attraction

The recently-completed Madame Tussauds Hollywood is a 40,000 sf three-story structural steel building featuring a museum attraction and two levels of subterranean parking. The stunning exterior skin incorporates architectural concrete, zinc panels, curtain-wall glazing and curved masonry shear walls. Building Information Modeling was used to ensure the complicated geometry was perfectly executed.

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NEW STATE INFRASTRUCTURE PANEL INCLUDES NO ARCHITECTS

NOT INVITED

Back in February, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger created a new program to foster private investment in public infrastructure projects in the hopes of stimulating a notoriously underfunded sector in California. On July 24, it was announced that the program would be overseen by a panel of experts known as the Public Infrastructure Advisory Commission. But it turns out that none of the commission's 23 members are licensed architects, drawing protest from the LA chapter of the AIA.

On August 11 John Kaliski, president of AIA/Los Angeles, wrote a letter to Dale Bonner, chair of the commission and head of the state's Business, Transportation, and Housing Agency, which oversees the commission. "We are greatly concerned that the omission of an architect on the PIAC Board will deter from your mandate 'to help state and regional transportation agencies develop performance-based partnerships that deliver real value to the public'," Kaliski wrote.

While the letter commended the state for taking steps to "resolve the current fiscal crisis" through public-private partnerships, Kaliski urged Bonner to "reconsider the present embodiment" of the commission.

The commission was created by Senate Bill 4, which opens the door for public entities to bid on the design, construction, maintenance, and operation of transportation facilities and work related to them. The agency hopes it will help close a projected \$50.3 billion gap for the state's infrastructure needs over the next decade. The commission will identify opportunities for such projects, research and analyze similar projects around the world, generate best practices, and pro-

vide advice and procurement-related services.

The commissioners in charge of this program include a number of transportation and infrastructure experts from government, labor, academia, and business, but there are also representatives from such unrelated groups as the Reason Foundation, Disney, and investment banking. There are only two engineers on the commission, and no designers.

Responding to why an architect was not included in the commission's composition, agency spokesman Michael Bowman said that the commission is "not tasked with designing plans [but with] providing best practices for financing agreements."

But AIA/LA remains steadfast. Will Wright, director of government and public affairs, said an architect could still provide valuable perspective on financial matters. "Having an architect on a commission that reviews project delivery arrangements can provide invaluable insight regarding how to maximize best value for the investment and how to best integrate that investment with the community," Wright wrote in an email.

And Kaliski reiterated that the vast experience of architects could not be ignored. "The most important aspect of architect participation is that architects and landscape architects are called upon increasingly to integrate the relationship between development, building, infrastructure, and the environment," Kaliski told *AN*. "Infrastructure, particularly as it involves the co-location of resources, is most definitely an engineering and design problem."

According to Bowman, the agency has been in contact with the AIA, but there are no plans to include architects, nor representatives of any other group concerned about the commission's work. Bowman instead stressed that the commission will be transparent and that the AIA's input was welcome. **TR**

AT DEADLINE

CRUISING FOR A TERMINAL

According to the *San Francisco Business Times*, the San Francisco Department of Public Works has selected KMD Architects and Pfau Long Architecture to design the Port of San Francisco's \$86.5 million cruise ship terminal on Pier 27. The team beat out rivals Skidmore, Owings & Merrill, Perkins + Will, and Mark Cavagnero Architects. The firms will convert the 178,000-square-foot pier and shed into a modern new terminal and public plaza.

THEATER MANIA

The Los Angeles City Council in early September approved its Broadway Theater and Entertainment District Design Guide, which is meant to direct renovations and new construction along the Broadway corridor downtown. Among other things, components of the plan will require parking located away from the street, reduced sign clutter, continuous streetwalls, and ground-floor uses that contribute to street life.

MAGNETIC MOVE

In mid-September, federal authorities announced \$45 million in funding to study the first phase of a Maglev corridor between Las Vegas and Southern California. If built, the California-Nevada Interstate Maglev project would create a 269-mile line from Las Vegas to Anaheim. The first stretch would run from Vegas to Primm, Nevada, on the California border. The funds had been approved years ago, but had been held up by congressional disputes.

NOT SO GRAND

Bill Witte, West Coast president of the Related Companies, told the *LA Downtown News* on September 18 that his company's \$1 billion, 1.3 million-square-foot Grand Avenue project (known as The Grand) will continue to be stalled for some time. He told the paper that the company "is waiting out the current recession and the frozen lending markets, and will still need an estimated \$700 million construction loan." The project still has no groundbreaking date.

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The Solon Headquarters in Berlin.

Even as the world gets greener, global power demand is growing, pushing renewable forms like solar energy into the mainstream. Meanwhile, buildings continue to top the list of power guzzlers, consuming 40 percent of world demand. As architecture moves forward, it will become increasingly important to not only use less energy, but to produce it. **Aaron Seward** investigates the promise and pitfalls of building-integrated photovoltaics, and the hurdles that remain in the way of architecture's future.

THE GLASS ELEPHANT

MANFRED JARISCH

When the global glass industry convened in Tampere, Finland in June, the top item on the agenda was the coming wave of solar power—glassy arrays spanning the desert and crowning rooftops. But architects in the audience took note of one prophet in particular: Lèon Glessen, the CEO of Scheuten, a leading electric glass producer based in Germany. Office buildings, he pointed out, are notoriously wasteful, for they are occupied only five days in a week, and just eight hours a day. Factor in lunch breaks, sick time, and vacation, and they're used about 12 percent of the time. These are primarily glass-clad structures, often 800 feet tall or higher, standing vacant most of the time: a vast opportunity, in other words, to generate solar power.

Over the past decade, the architectural glass industry has made huge strides in improving the material's thermal and sun-control performance. Its next step is the grail that Glessen went on to promote: energy production. Up until this point, creating buildings with energy-producing solar cells integral to the design—known as building-integrated photovoltaics (BIPV)—has remained something of a chimera. On paper, BIPVs open the way to elegant, carbon-neutral architecture. In practice, however, they never seem to generate much power, usually only a fraction of a building's overall demand. And aesthetically, today's clunky panel systems leave much to be desired. "One limitation of many of the solar products is that they come in only standard sizes," explained Michael Ludvik of facade consultant Dewhurst MacFarlane & Partners, "which can make paneling an actual facade tough."

The game is slowly changing, however, thanks to advances in solar technology. BIPVs come in two basic forms: crystalline and thin film. The crystalline variety is composed of silicon, a semiconducting material, which is typically fabricated in five-inch squares that are .012 inches thick. These squares are then wired together and laminated to glass to create modules that can then be used in architectural applications. The thin-film variety involves spraying a fine layer of semiconducting material to a substrate of glass, though stainless steel and plastic can also be used. Both technologies have their pros and cons. Crystalline cells—by far the most commonly used—can be combined more flexibly to create a wider variety

of panel dimensions. They are also more efficient electricity producers than their thin-film counterparts. On the other hand, crystalline cells are more expensive to produce and wasteful of material—electrical current is only produced on the surface of the semiconductor; the rest of the .012-inch thickness is only needed for structural support during manufacturing. Thin film, which is gaining market share, offers the benefit of a sleeker look. The material can also be etched away from its substrate with lasers to allow light and views to pass through.

The majority of BIPV projects completed to date are in Europe and Japan, where lavish government incentives and strong public support have made fertile ground for such systems to be developed and implemented. Noteworthy examples include the Solon Headquarters in Germany, designed by Schulte-Frohlinde Architekten. Solon, a solar-panel manufacturer, outfitted its 300,000-square-foot facility with a BIPV canopy and array that has an output of 210 kWh, producing 15 percent of the electricity needed for its administrative functions. The company made the canopy's 1,000 panels out of crystalline wafers laminated to glass. They ring the sloping grass roof and provide sun shading as well as power generation.

A second notable project with a BIPV canopy is the Kanazawa Municipal Bus Terminal in Japan, designed by Taiyo Architects. As opposed to a crystalline system, here the architects specified a thin-film product from Suntech called See Thru, which is five percent transparent and resembles tinted glass. With 3,000 panels covering 32,000 square feet, Kanazawa's array produces 112 kWh, saving the terminal 86,465 kilowatt hours annually.

BIPVs have made less of an inroad in the United States. This is ironic, considering that the practice got its start here in the 1970s, when solar electric and hot-water panels began sprouting on south-facing roofs. While there are many reasons that the U.S. has fallen behind, experts seem to agree that the principal culprit is code requirements. In the U.S., as in Japan and Europe, BIPV

hardware must be tested by a publicly registered laboratory. In Europe and Japan, however, once that piece of hardware is certified, the manufacturer can make minor changes without having to go back for more testing. Not so in the U.S. And, until very recently, there has been only one venue for testing: Underwriters Laboratories (UL).

"The most significant barrier to market penetration in the U.S. is UL testing," affirmed Steven Strong of Boston-based Solar Design Associates. "UL says if you change anything, you have to come back to us and we're going to retest your hardware. They've killed more projects than I care to list."

Another factor that makes BIPV less attractive financially in the U.S. is a lack of what are known as feed-in tariffs, which give developers strong incentives for pursuing the technology by basically offering cash to feed energy back into the grid. "We have one hand tied behind our back," said Robert Heintges of facade consulting firm R.A. Heintges Associates. "In Europe, you can sell the electricity back to the power company at four times the cost."

As a result, the BIPV projects that do wind up getting built are generally those with long lead times and deep-pocketed, idealistic clients. And considering that BIPVs are generally not as efficient as the plain-vanilla roof systems, since they don't always wind up in the optimum orientation to the sun, they typically are requested by clients who are looking for a very visible indicator of their dedication to sustainability—a green billboard.

Such was the case at the Lillis Business Center at the University of Oregon in Eugene, completed in 2003. Designed by SRG Partnership, the project features a 65-foot-high, south-facing glass wall outfitted with crystalline wafers. The architects adjusted the density of the wafer grid so that it is more tightly packed at the top, reducing glare on the interior, and more loosely filled toward the bottom, maintaining a good degree of transparency. The wall generates only about 6 kWh, but it is tied to a skylight system of the same make and to standard PV arrays mounted on the mechanical penthouse, for a total of 45 kWh. All told, the project's PVs make up ten percent of the building's energy usage.

Perhaps the highest-profile U.S. project to date is the Renzo Piano-designed California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco. According to Michael Wilson of Stantec Architecture, the architect of record on the project, a photovoltaic canopy was not part of the original concept, as Piano did not think the cells would complement his design. But in 2003, after looking at the quality of the solar glass available, he changed his mind. More than 700 four-by-six-foot glass panels embedded with crystalline photovoltaic cells ring the

academy's 197,000-square-foot roof—the largest such installation in the U.S. The system was expected to generate 213,000 kWh per year, providing up to 10 percent of the academy's electricity needs. During September 2008, its first full month of operation, the canopy generated 850 kWh of energy per day, putting it well on target to meet its annual goal.

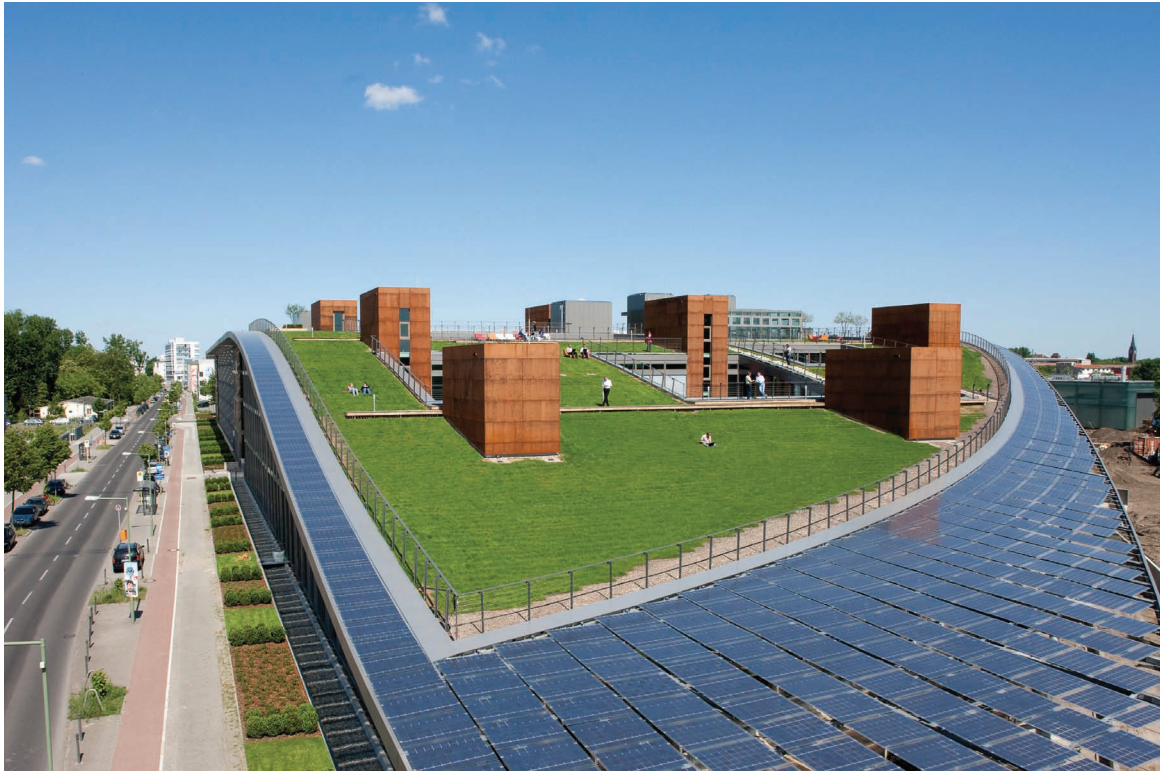
BIPV is still kicking in the U.S. residential market as well. The National Association of Home Builders' 2009 New American Home, its annual showcase of construction technology, features a 10.64 kWh photovoltaic system integrated into a trellis and awning structure that shelters a poolside cabana. The BIPV system features Sanyo solar cells that use a hybrid crystalline/thin film technology to generate electricity from both the front and back of the panel, turning the company's standard 200-watt panel into a 260-watt panel. It is expected to generate the home's estimated annual consumption, powering the lights and electrical appliances, and even heating the pool.

The harsh realities of working with BIPVs in the U.S. have not stopped the architecture profession from dreaming big. While current technologies account for only small portions of buildings' electricity demands, increasing efficiencies in both photovoltaic output and building energy usage is expected to eventually close that gap. Kiss + Cathcart's design for the hypothetical 2020 Tower gives a glimpse of what this future might resemble. Project engineer Arup found that a tall building in 2020 would consume an average of 60 kWh per square meter per year, significantly less than the 100 kWh that the most efficient buildings of this type use today. Since tall buildings do not have much roof area, the architects had to work with the vertical surfaces. They increased the ratio of facade area to floor area, determining that a 60-foot-deep building could generate all its energy on an annual basis from a BIPV facade independent of orientation.

The consensus is that in most countries solar will reach grid parity—meaning it will cost the same to produce as conventional sources—within five years. But even with the status quo, there is a strong argument for incorporating PVs into buildings. "What I like about BIPV is that if you are already putting up a glass structure, you've already paid for much of the hardware that you would need to support a solar cell," said Paul Stoller of environmental consultancy Atelier Ten. One way or another, solar will soon hit the mainstream, and those who have turned their backs on the technology might look rather like the Luddites of industrializing England. Surely architects will know better.

AARON SEWARD IS AN ASSOCIATE EDITOR AT AN.

TRIC



SOLON HEADQUARTERS



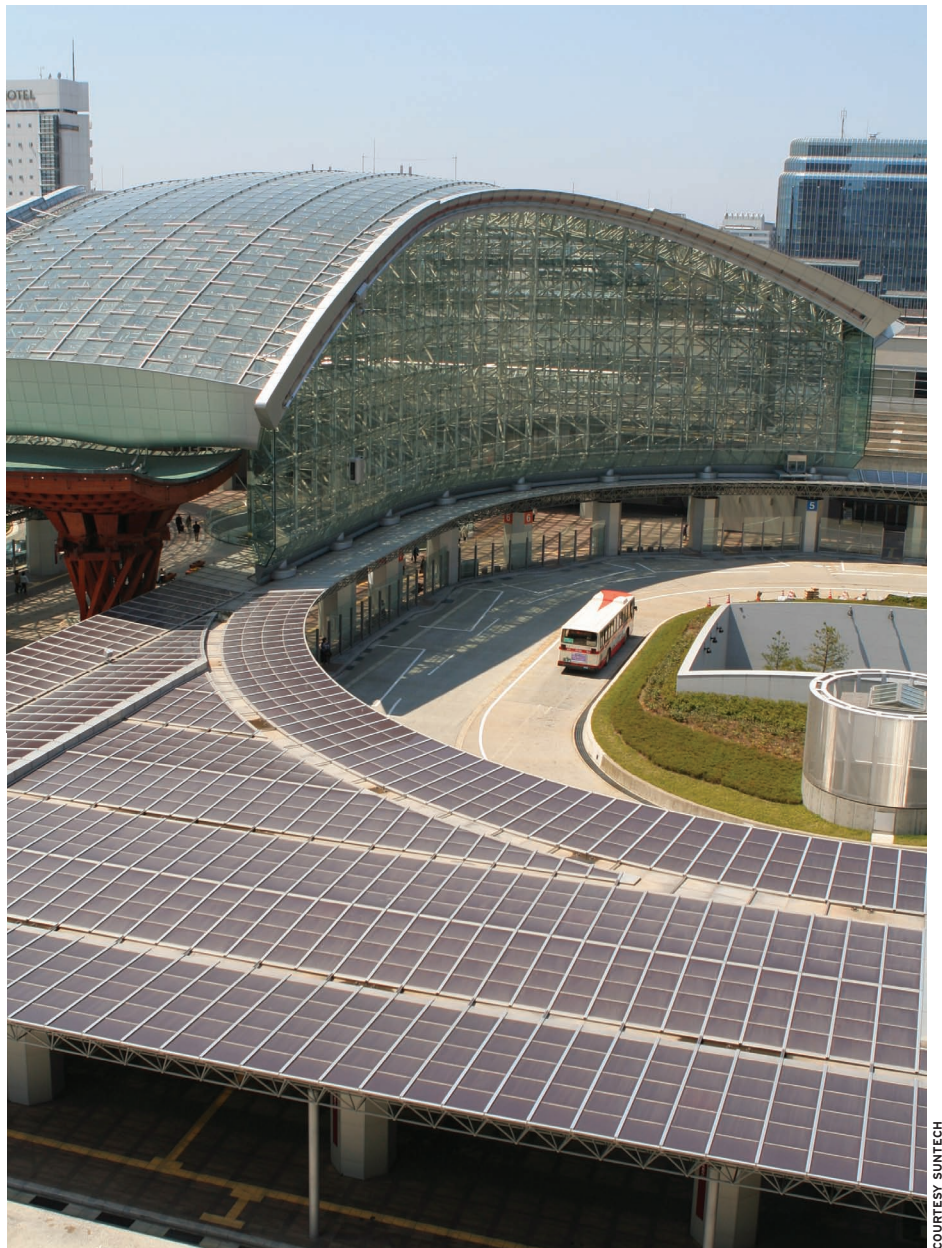
LEFT: MANFRED JARISCH; RIGHT: SILKE REENTS

Berlin-based solar-module manufacturer Solon opened its new corporate and production headquarters earlier this year. The design, by German firm Schulte-Frohlinde Architekten, features approximately 1,000 BIPV glass panels that encircle and sit atop the building's green roof, producing 210 kWh in addition to providing solar shading for administrative spaces.

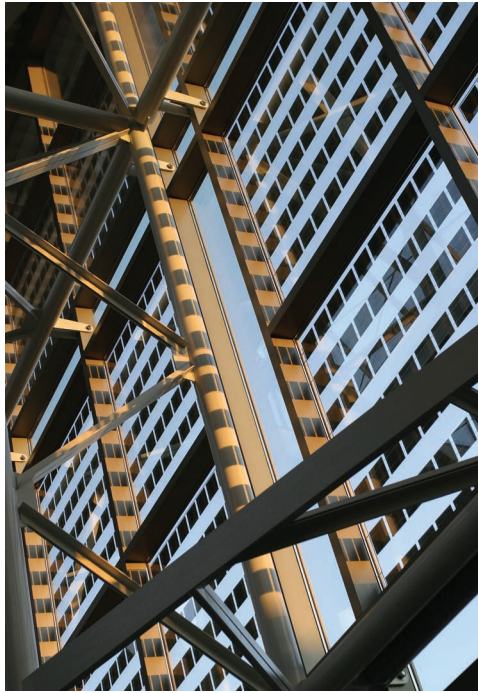


KANAZAWA BUS TERMINAL

One of the world's largest thin-film PV glazing projects to date, the Kanazawa Municipal Bus Terminal by Taiyo Architects was completed in 2005, with 3,000 panels customized to meet Japan's heavy snow-load requirements. The canopy glazing has five percent transparency, producing 112 kWh and cutting the structure's carbon footprint by 686 tons over a 20-year period.



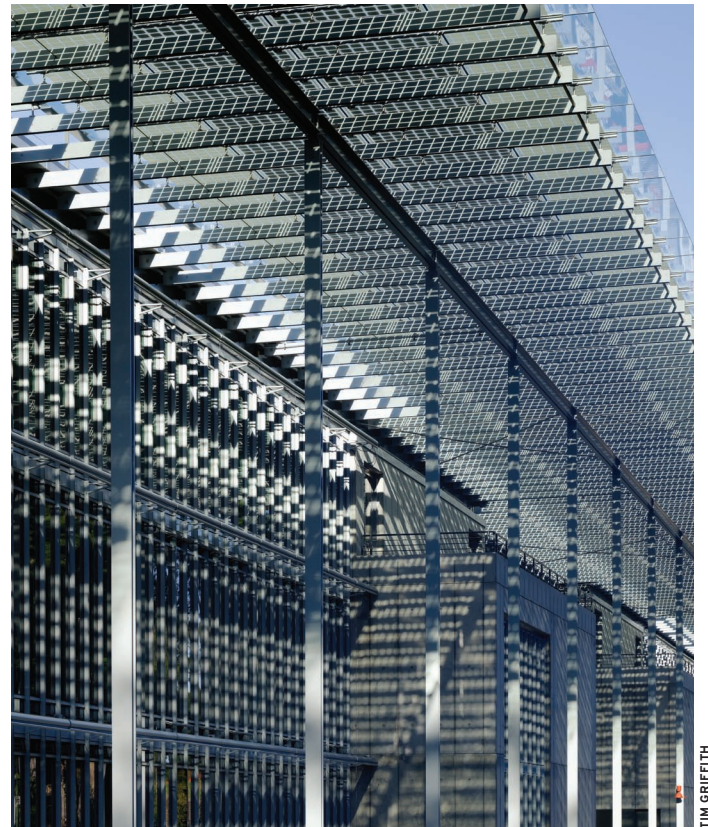
COURTESY SUNTECH



A 65-foot curtain wall with BIPVs arrayed in a varying density marks the entrance to the Lillis Business Center at the University of Oregon, designed by SRG Partnership and completed in 2003. The building was awarded a LEED Silver designation in 2005, in part due to four separate PV systems that produce a combined total of 45 kWh.

LEFT: RICK KEATING; RIGHT: COURTESY SRG PARTNERSHIP

LILLIS BUSINESS CENTER



TIM GRIFFITH

CALIFORNIA ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Renzo Piano is said to have conceived his original design for the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco without a solar canopy, but after seeing the PV technology available, the architect ringed the building with 720 PV-embedded panels that produce 172 kWh and helped the academy gain its LEED Platinum certification following its completion in 2008.

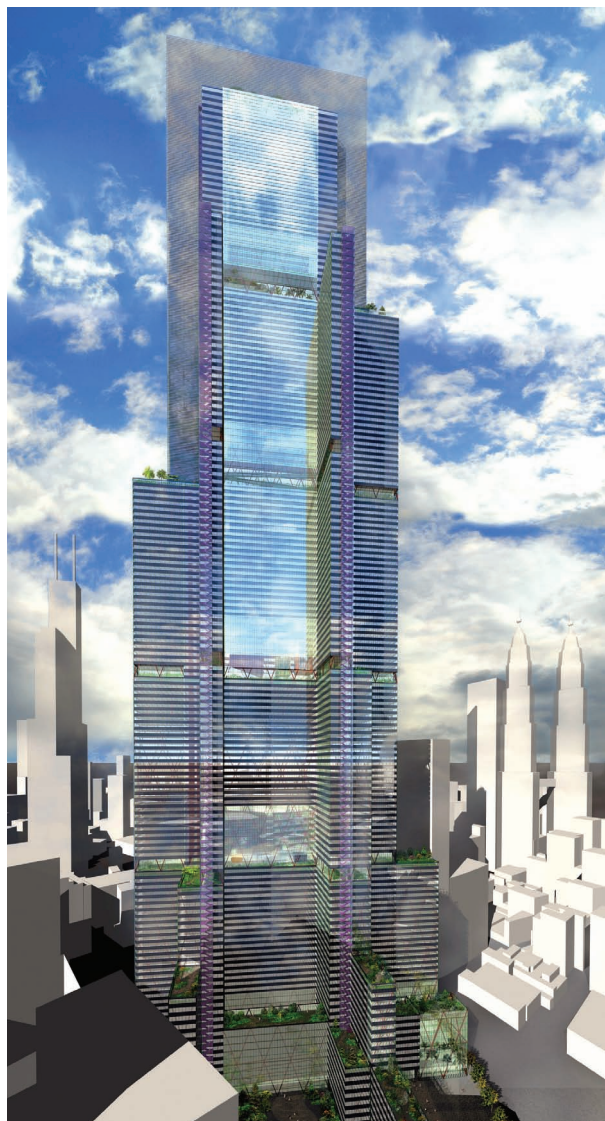


The National Association of Home Builders' 2009 New American Home show house in Las Vegas, designed by California-based Danielian Associates, integrates a new type of PV technology into its poolside trellis and awning structures. The bifacial panels manufactured by Sanyo produce power from both sides, resulting in a previously unattainable 23 percent energy-conversion efficiency.



COURTESY SANYO

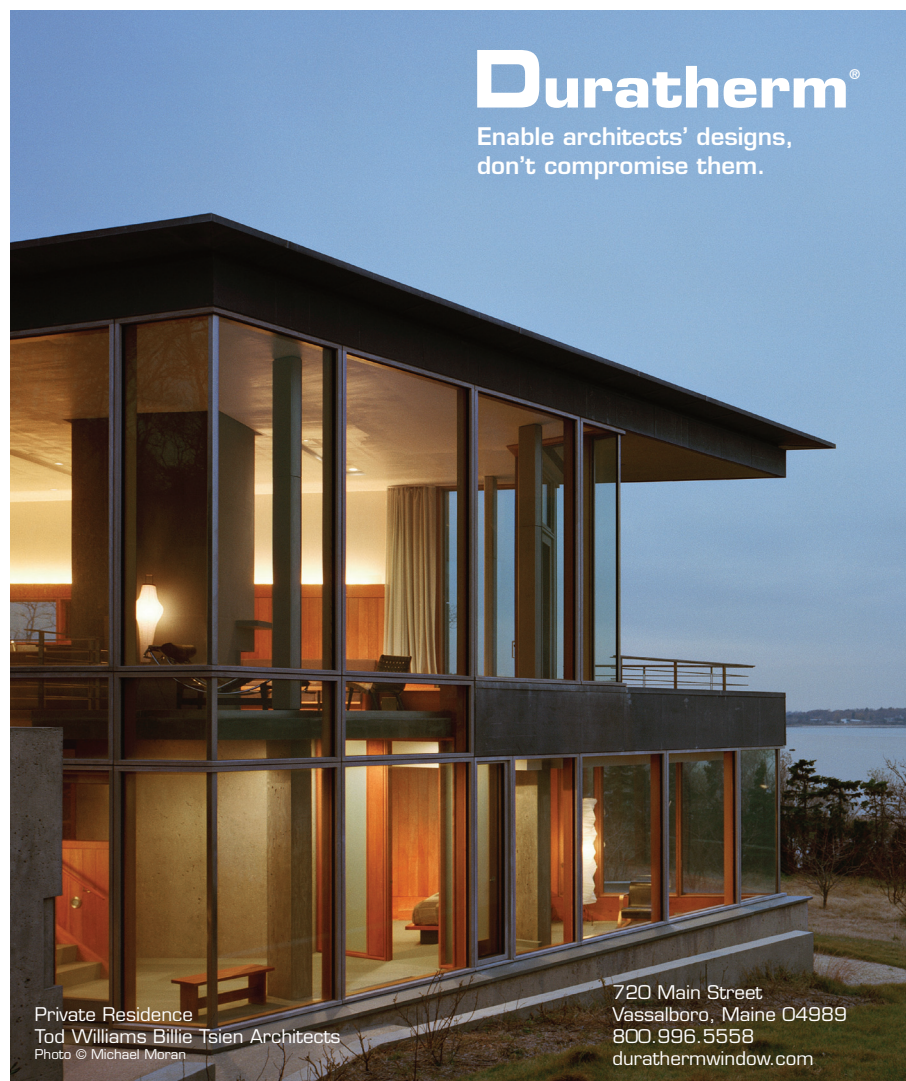
NEW AMERICAN HOME



2020 TOWER

Kiss + Cathcart's 2020 Tower concept is a study of what a New York net-zero skyscraper could look like. The tower's slender profile increases the amount of sunlight hitting its BIPV glass facade, which with today's technology could produce two-thirds of the building's energy demands—about 100 kWh per square meter each year—with the remainder met by integrated wind turbines.

COURTESY KISS + CATHCART, ARCHITECTS




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A 3D architectural rendering of a modern, two-story house with a minimalist design. The house features large windows, a flat roof, and a light-colored exterior. The front yard is landscaped with green grass and a concrete patio area. On the patio, there is a dining table with white chairs and a lounge area with a sofa and armchair. The background shows a clear blue sky and some trees. The text "KWD" is overlaid in large, stylized letters at the top, and contact information is at the bottom.

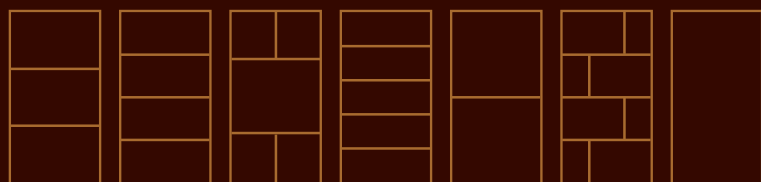
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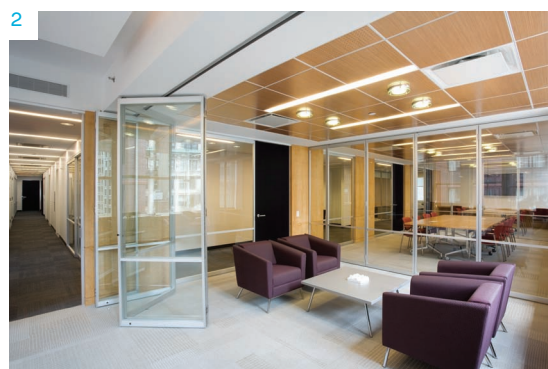
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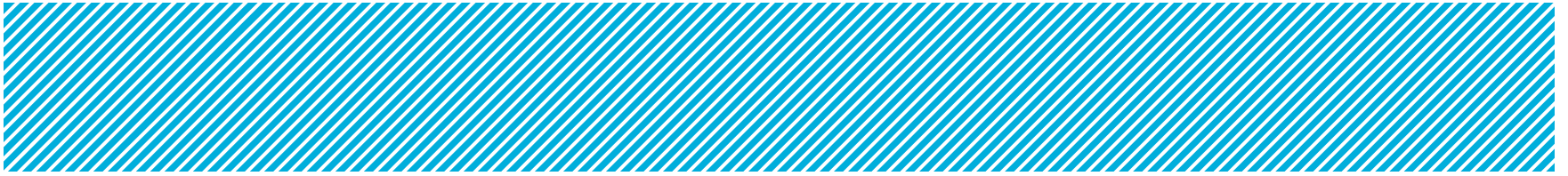


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3 MODEL 175
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www.raydoor.com

4 RESIDENTIAL
PANEL SYSTEM
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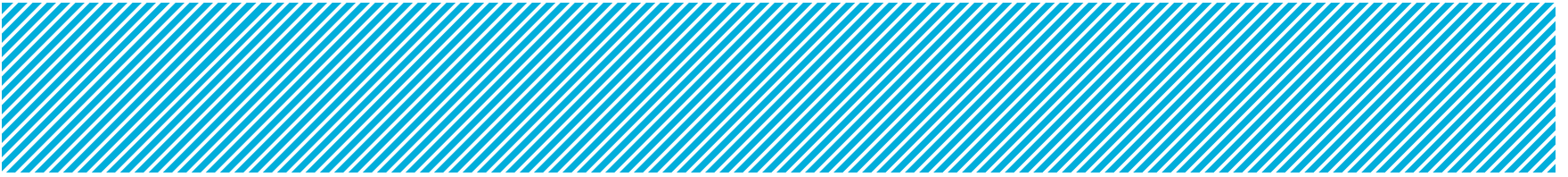
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7 HORIZONTAL
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9 LIFTSLIDE DOOR
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www.weilandslidingdoors.com

10 WAY COOL SERIES
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**11 WINDOW-DOOR
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The Sliding Door Company's sliding door system allows glass panels to be customized with wood or aluminum divider strips that can be removed or reconfigured without marking the doors. A patented panel-safety mechanism ensures that doors will not leave their tracks, which are 3/8-inch high and meet ADA requirements.

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**13 STAINLESS STEEL
SLIDING DOOR**
MODERNUS

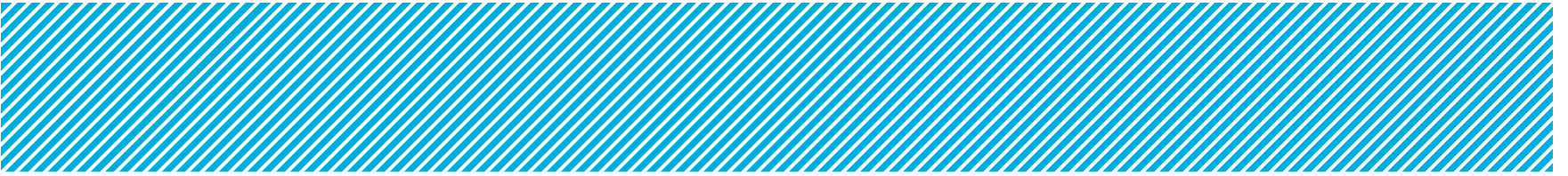
Modernus sliding doors have a stainless-steel frame with an inset ceiling track, making the door a good solution for low-profile room divisions in which a floor track is undesirable (as shown on page 21). Glass panels can be customized with any finish or pattern, and framing is also available in aluminum.

www.modernus.com

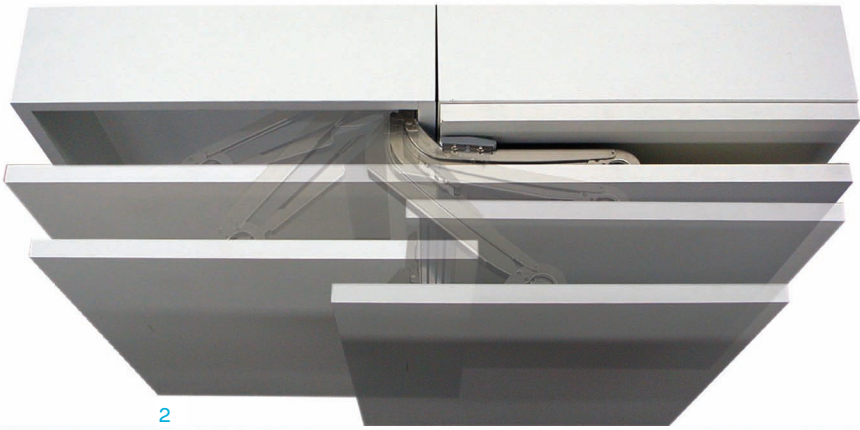
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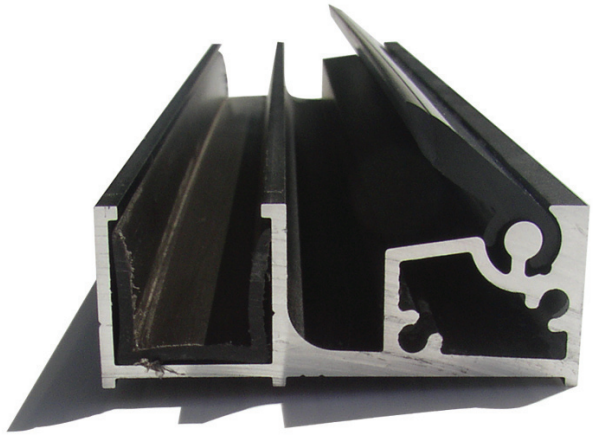
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www.sugatsune.com

3 ZERO-STEP SILL LA CANTINA DOORS

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www.lacantinadoors.com

4 BALDUR KROWN LAB

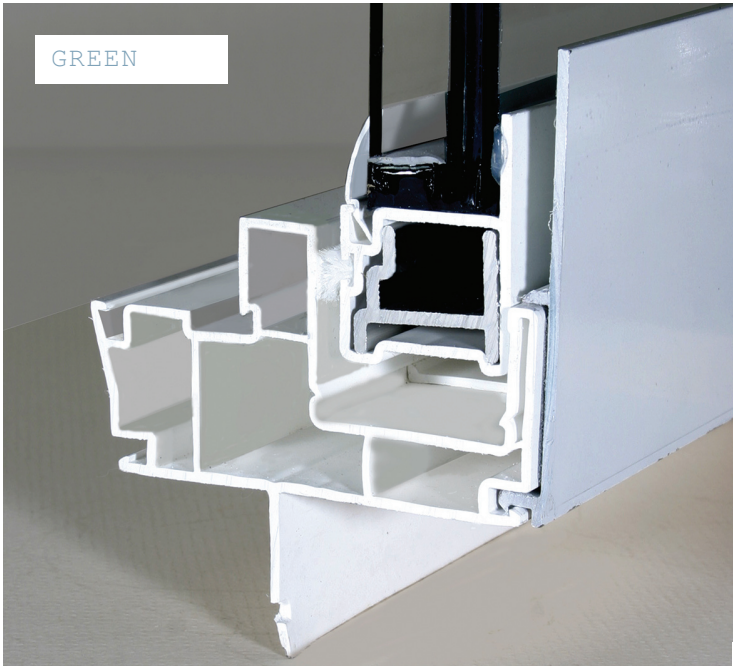
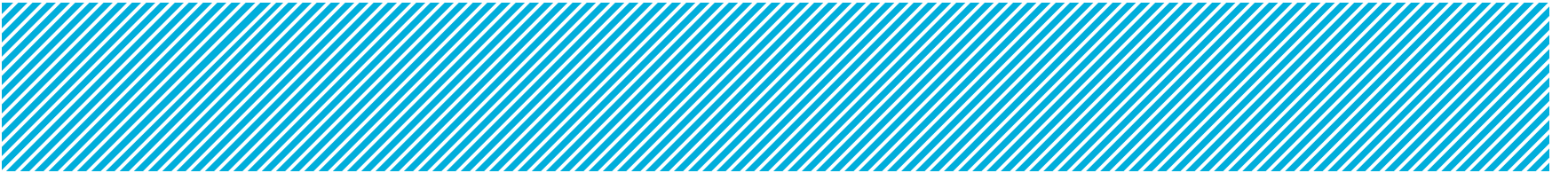
Baldur sliding door hardware is custom-made for door panels of up to 400 pounds on tracks up to 20 feet long. Patent-pending hubless hardware on 4-inch exposed industrial bearings is made of precise, machine-finished stainless steel that resists rust or corrosion in humid environments.

www.krownlab.com

5 TERRA H MWE

Designed for installations in which the ceiling cannot support the weight of a sliding door, the Terra H system is installed underneath the door leaf. The visible stainless-steel roller and runner rail leave very little static mass to be supported by the ceiling track.

www.mwe.de



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1 SAFEHARBOR SERIES 352 ATRIUM COMPANIES

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2 WINGUARD IMPACT-RESISTANT 770 PGT INDUSTRIES

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www.pgtindustries.com

3 LIFT AND SLIDE DOORS MONTAG WINDOWS & DOORS

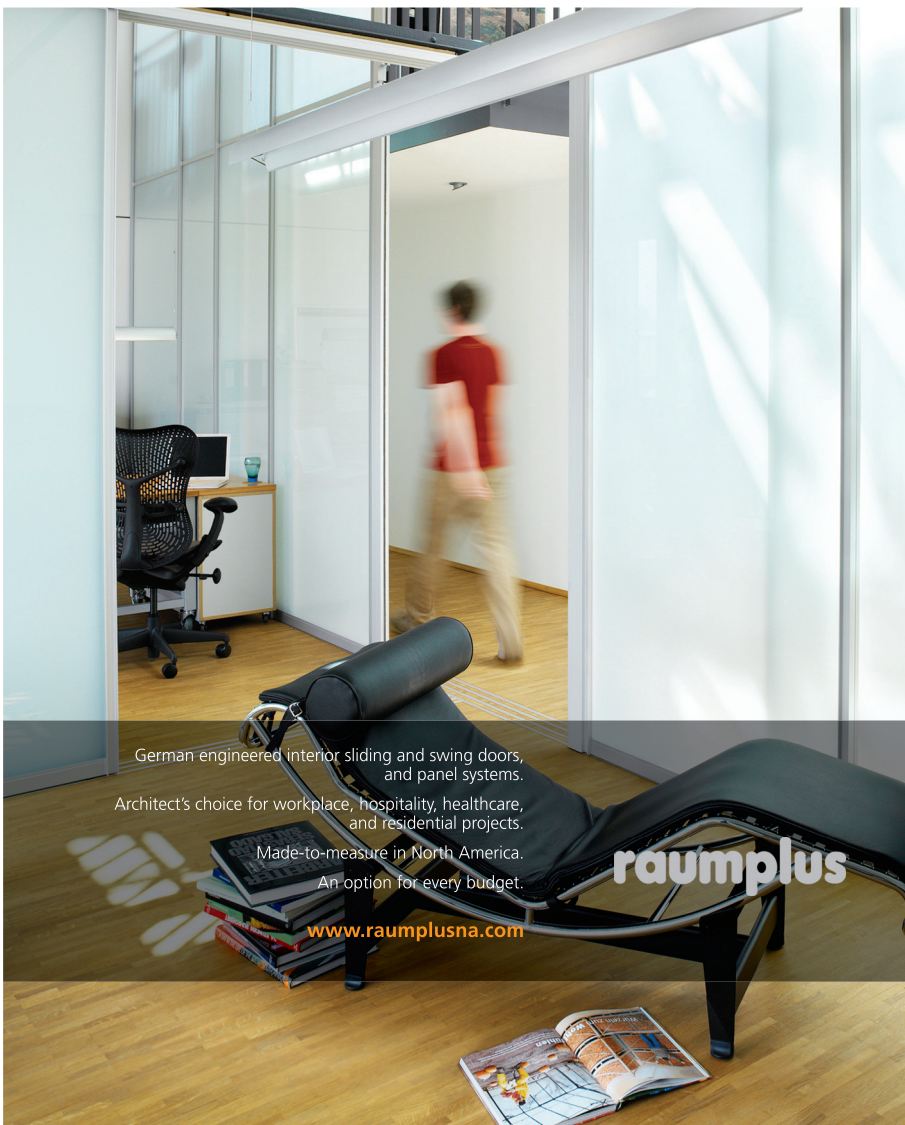
After making its U.S. debut last year, Montag has achieved Miami-Dade and State of Florida HVHZ (high-velocity hurricane zone) impact certification. With impact design pressures of +65/-77 psf, four-by-eight-foot doors are available in two-, three-, or four-panel configurations with an optional remote operating system.

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SEPTEMBER

WEDNESDAY 30
LECTURE

Christine Madrid French, Alan Hess, Leo Marmol, David C. Martin, and Chris Nichols
The Sixties Turn 50: Challenges and Opportunities of Preserving 60s Architecture
8:00 p.m.
Los Angeles Department of Water and Power Building
111 North Hope St., Los Angeles
www.laconservancy.org

OCTOBER

THURSDAY 1
SYMPOSIUM

West Coast Green
8:00 a.m.
Through October 3
Fort Mason Center, San Francisco
www.westcoastgreen.com

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Gustavo Ramos Rivera: Recent Work
Elins Eagles-Smith Gallery
49 Geary St., San Francisco
www.eesgallery.com

Artepicurus: The Taste for Art
Artamo Gallery
11 West Anapamu St., Santa Barbara
www.artamogallery.com

FRIDAY 2
LECTURE

Volkan Alkannoglu On Distortion
1:00 p.m.
W. M. Keck Lecture Hall
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

SATURDAY 3
SYMPOSIUM

Peripheral Visions: Colonization, Resistance, Representation
9:30 a.m.
The J. Paul Getty Center
1200 Getty Center Dr., Los Angeles
www.getty.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING I've Watered a Horseshoe as If It Were a Flower
Adrian Ghenie, Ciprian Muresan, Tom Chamberlain, Serban Savu, and Miklos Onucsan
Nicodim Gallery
944 Chung King Rd., Los Angeles
www.nicodimgallery.com

WITH THE KIDS

Majestic Totems
1:30 p.m.
Craft and Folk Art Museum
5814 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
www.cafam.org

SUNDAY 4
LECTURE

Alan Pate
The Dolls of Hina-matsuri
2:00 p.m.
Japanese American National Museum
369 East 1st St., Los Angeles
www.janm.org

EXHIBITION OPENING

Heat Waves in a Swamp: The Paintings of Charles Burchfield
The Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
www.hammer.ucla.edu

TUESDAY 6
LECTURE

Where Hope Lives: How Design Can Transform Lives and Communities
7:30 p.m.
Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater
631 West 2nd St., Los Angeles
www.redcat.org

SYMPOSIUM

Community College Summit: Building Gateways to the Green Economy
Through October 7
Pasadena Convention Center
300 East Green St., Pasadena
www.green-technology.org

WEDNESDAY 7
LECTURE

Marcelo Spina Wholes, Holes, and All the Other Stuff in Between
7:00 p.m.
W. M. Keck Lecture Hall
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

THURSDAY 8
LECTURE

Carleton Varney Houses in My Heart
11:00 a.m.
Pacific Design Center
8687 Melrose Ave., West Hollywood
www.pacificdesigncenter.com

Generating Solar Power
6:30 p.m.
Office of Tracy A. Stone Architect
2041 Blake Ave., Los Angeles
www.aialosangeles.com

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Echo: Eight San Francisco Artists Respond to Surrealist Masterworks
Frey Norris Gallery Annex
456 Geary St., San Francisco
www.freynorris.com

Molten Color: Glassmaking in Antiquity
The J. Paul Getty Villa
17985 Pacific Coast Hwy., Pacific Palisades
www.getty.edu

SATURDAY 10
EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Mark Licari
Monterey Museum of Art La Mirada
720 Via Mirada, Monterey
www.montereyart.org

Frank Kozik
Billy Shire Fine Arts
5790 Washington Blvd., Culver City
www.billyshirefinearts.com

SUNDAY 11
EXHIBITION OPENING

Carlos Amoraes Discarded Spider
Orange County Museum of Art
850 San Clemente Dr., Newport Beach
www.ocma.net

TUESDAY 13
LECTURE

Allen Ruppersberg and Christophe Cherix Table of Contents
7:00 p.m.
Santa Monica Museum of Art
2525 Michigan Ave., Santa Monica
www.smmoa.org

EXHIBITION OPENING Contemporary Glass

Palm Springs Art Museum
101 Museum Dr., Palm Springs
www.psmuseum.org

WEDNESDAY 14
LECTURE

Laurie Olin It's Called Landscape Architecture, Not Landscape Gardening for a Reason
7:00 p.m.
W. M. Keck Lecture Hall
960 East 3rd St., Los Angeles
www.sciarc.edu

THURSDAY 15
EXHIBITION OPENING

Bean and Alan Finneran Three Decades of Sculpture, Performance & Photography
Braunstein/Quay Gallery
430 Clementina St., San Francisco
www.bquayartgallery.com

SATURDAY 17
EVENT

Spinning Marinetti's Wheels
8:00 p.m.
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
151 3rd St., San Francisco
www.sfmoma.org

LECTURE

Jing Liu, Florian Idenburg, and Qingyun Ma Future Archeology
12:00 p.m.
Woodbury Hollywood Exhibitions
6520 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles
www.laforum.org

EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Judith Linhares, Jasmine Little, and Cyril Kuhn Inside Out
Jancar Gallery
3875 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
www.jancargallery.com

Jennifer Steinkamp
ACME.
6150 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
www.acmelosangeles.com

Heroes and Villains: The Battle for Good in India's Comics
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
www.lacma.org

Suzy Lake
Solway Jones Gallery
5377 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
www.solwayjonesgallery.com

WITH THE KIDS

Cool Clay Creatures
1:30 p.m.
Craft and Folk Art Museum
5814 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
www.cafam.org

SUNDAY 18
EXHIBITION OPENING

A World Alongside: Images in the Margins of Medieval and Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts
3:00 p.m.
The J. Paul Getty Center
1200 Getty Center Dr., Los Angeles
www.getty.edu

WEDNESDAY 21
EVENT

2009 AIALA Design Awards Party
6:00 p.m.
American Cinematheque Egyptian Theatre
6712 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles
www.aialosangeles.org

THURSDAY 22
LECTURE

Silvia Barisone Italian Futurist Design
7:00 p.m.
Los Angeles County Museum of Art
5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
www.lacma.org

SATURDAY 24
LECTURE

Herculaneum: Conserving and Interpreting the Roman Past
2:00 p.m.
The J. Paul Getty Villa
17985 Pacific Coast Hwy., Pacific Palisades
www.getty.edu

EXHIBITION OPENING The Bible Illuminated

The Hammer Museum
10899 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
www.hammer.ucla.edu

SUNDAY 25
EXHIBITION OPENINGS

Tara Donovan
Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego
1100 Kettner Blvd., San Diego
www.mcasd.org

New Topographics

Los Angeles County Museum of Art
5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
www.lacma.org

MONDAY 26
LECTURE

John Richardson 10th Annual Axline Lecture
7:00 p.m.
Old Globe Theatre, Balboa Park
1363 Old Globe Way, San Diego
www.mcasd.org

EXHIBITION OPENING Architecture in China, France, Italy, and Malaysia

USC School of Architecture
Bing Auditorium, University Park
arch.usc.edu

WEDNESDAY 28
EVENT

City by Design Book Launch Party
6:00 p.m.
AIA San Francisco
130 Sutter St., San Francisco
www.aiaf.org

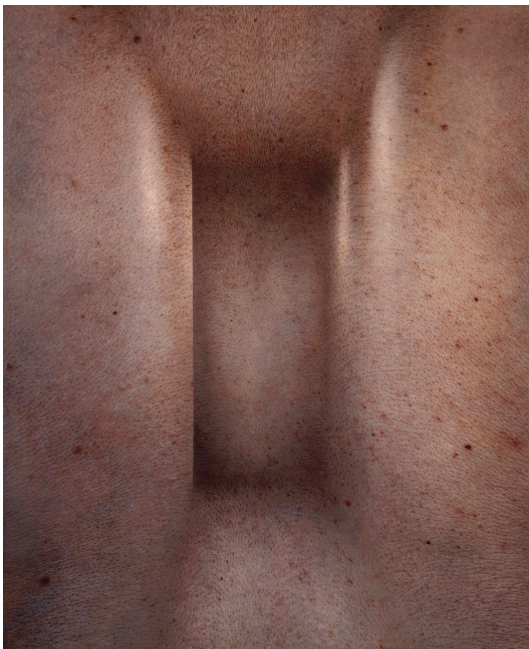


COURTESY SO-IL

FUTURE ARCHEOLOGY
SOLID OBJECTIVES-IDENBURG LIU

Los Angeles Forum for Architecture and Urban Design
Woodbury Hollywood Exhibitions
6520 Hollywood Boulevard, Los Angeles
Through October 18

Six recent projects by architects Solid Objectives-Idenburg Liu (SO-IL) are on display at the Los Angeles Forum for Architecture and Urban Design, grouped under the rubric *Future Archeology*. Through models, photographs, and collaborations with artists, the works collectively stake out a position on architecture's relationship to the virtual world. "Where in a pre-network culture, architecture shaped the social realm, it now risks becoming the frictionless, temporary carrier of the virtual," the architects argue. The result, in their view, is a culture of disposable buildings, towns, and icons. By contrast, *Future Archeology* attempts to envision an architecture that prioritizes substance over slickness, and tactility over sterility. Their 2008 design for a weekend house, built on a forested hill in New York's Hudson Valley (above), breaks down the "man-overlooking-nature" paradigm with natural stone and a floor plan that integrates the house with its surroundings. A series of terrariums by Paula Hayes rounds out the exhibition, adding dirt, life, and imperfection as a further riposte to antiseptic modern architecture.



COURTESY SFMOMA

SENSATE: BODIES AND DESIGN

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art
151 3rd Street, San Francisco
Through November 8

The works in the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art's new group show share an organicism that runs the gamut from the abstract to the disconcertingly literal. In the former camp are pieces like Andrew Kudless' *P_Wall* (2006/2009), a site-specific installation consisting of an undulating plaster-cast surface grafted onto the gallery's 45-foot-long wall. Its globular forms evoke skin, muscle, and fat while avoiding specific bodily references. Anthony Aziz and Sammy Cucher's chromogenic aluminum print *Interior #1* (1998, above) evokes a sort of skin, with speckled flesh tones receding into a non-organic rectangle. On the literal end of the spectrum are pieces like John Dickinson's white-painted wood *Bone Cigarette Table* (1977), whose tabletop rests on four knock-kneed skeletal legs. As befitting an exhibit with an animist take on architecture, not all the works on display are static, instead mutating over time as if alive: Alex Schweder's imposing *A Sac of Rooms All Day Long* (2009) begins each morning as a crumpled pile of clear vinyl, and slowly inflates over the course of the day into the shape of two nested houses.



COURTESY A RTHOUSE FILMS

SHULMAN'S JOY

Visual Acoustics: The Modernism of Julius Shulman

Directed by Eric Bricker

Nuart Theatre

11272 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles

Opens October 16

For anyone who was never graced by the presence and persona of Julius Shulman, Eric Bricker's documentary film *Visual Acoustics* gives a precious and intimate entry into

the life, work, and philosophy of one of the greatest photographers of modern architecture, who died this summer at the age of 98.

The film, which screens at San

Francisco's Architecture and the City Festival on September 30 and receives its Los Angeles theatrical premiere in October, will certainly stir up fond memories for those who knew "Uncle Julius." It reveals him as a master of the art of living, radiating a lightness of being and appreciation for the people and environment around him. It also reveals him as a stubborn and demanding artist who as a young man "took corrections" from Neutra and Schindler and was capable of giving just as harsh corrections to novices encountered on his projects or even

on the filmmakers' own shoot.

Visual Acoustics tells several stories in parallel—of Julius Shulman the humanist, artist, activist, and image-maker, and of the modern movement and Shulman's major place in that history. The film cycles through the chapters of his life, from his youth on a Connecticut farm to his growing up, camera in hand, at the same time as the city of Los Angeles. It chronicles Shulman finding his calling with the making of a photo of an early Neutra house, and the world of collaborations to follow.

Shulman's chronology is interwoven with that of the history and ambition of the European modern movement and the rise of California modernism through animated "visual symphonies," designed by New York motion graphics specialists Trollback + Company. Incorporating Shulman's images, historical photos, and text, the animation work is subtle in its attempt to formally weave image to image, focusing our attention on the compositional strength and dynamism of Shulman's photos. Lines merge with lines, or emerge as webs to reveal the perspectival structure of both image and architecture. This subtle play is jarringly interrupted with a brief series of Monty Python-esque collages used to wittily present historical facts about the modern movement, potentially undercutting the historical credibility of the content. Fortunately, this comic interlude is counterbalanced by poignant interviews with scholars and curators (Thomas Hines and Joseph Rosa), architect clients (Mark Lee

and Frank Gehry), and friends and fans (Ed Ruscha and Tom Ford) articulating the historical relevance of specific images, the architecture photographed, and the architect-collaborators.

To complement the architectural history lessons, the film gives us personal stories about Shulman, the architects, and their architecture through social calls to the owners of several photographed houses. Witnessing these visits, it is clear that Shulman's photographs were vital in restoring Neutra's Miller House and others to their original condition. But we also witness the ongoing relationships Shulman maintained with the original or subsequent owners of the houses he photographed.

Bricker, who befriended Shulman over the course of several years prior to making the film, takes us into the inner sanctum of Shulman's Raphael Soriano-designed studio. Here we are given insight to both the quality of space in which he worked, the personal relationships with all those around him—his daughter, gallerists, and work associates—and the volume of images produced over his career. The man and his glass treasure-trove of images impressed Bricker at their first meeting, and in his film we see this archive being prepared for its future life in the Getty Foundation Archives. But most of all, it is this last-minute glimpse of Shulman's joie de vivre that is the ultimate strength and value of Bricker's film.

BETH WEINSTEIN IS FOUNDER OF THE NEW YORK-BASED DESIGN STUDIO ARCHITECTURE AGENCY.

Teutonic Tome

Designing Modern Germany

Jeremy Aynsley

Reaktion Books, \$35.00

The history of design in modern Germany is as politically fraught as it is influential. Given this, plus the numerous existing histories on institutions like the Bauhaus or individuals like Peter Behrens, design historian Jeremy Aynsley was faced with a formidable task in the writing of *Designing Modern Germany*. The task, however, is also a worthy one, and Aynsley largely succeeds in delivering a history of German design from 1870 to 2005 that is informative, concise, and also comprehensive.

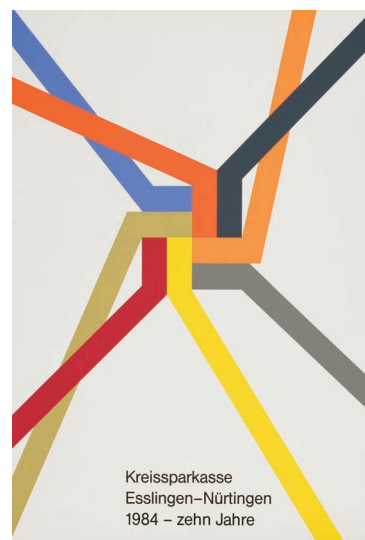
Aynsley's is a straightforward chronology, covering a wide variety of media, from graphic design to textile design, interior design and architecture to furniture design, industrial design, and fashion. In doing so, he draws on numerous

sources, incorporating contemporary newspaper and journal accounts, discussions of cultural theory and critical studies, even sources from popular culture and literature, such as Heinz Huber's short story "The New Apartment" from 1958, which is used in an analysis of postwar West German interior design. Aynsley's focus is not so much on individual objects or buildings, though he does highlight particularly influential examples, but more on the development of a German *culture* of design under the various political regimes of Germany's 20th century. Thus, chapters are more likely to discuss important institutions or exhibitions, such as the Ulm Academy for Design or the 1914 Werkbund exhibition in Cologne, rather than perform analyses of particular aesthetic traditions or innovations.

In fact, Aynsley is to be commended for his ability to negotiate between the general and specific, deftly alternating between summaries of events that span decades, and discussions of individual designers such as Marianne Brandt or Margaret Jahny, whose careers are exemplary or whose work is influential. In addition, Aynsley

avoids many of the pitfalls that plague other histories of German cultural production during this period. For example, in his discussion of the Weimar years, Aynsley examines the work of the Bauhaus, of course, but also the more traditional, conservative design that, as he notes, no doubt graced the majority of German households. He presents a nuanced discussion of design during the Nazi era in chapter three, acknowledging the unavoidable influence of the Nazis' racist and nationalist ideology, but also the regime's ambivalent attitude toward modernism and the "dilemmas" confronted by individual German designers of this period. Likewise, in writing about the postwar era, Aynsley offers a comparative account of design produced in both the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG, West Germany) and the German Democratic Republic (GDR, East Germany), addressing the influence each country had on the cultural production of the other.

Though there is much to recommend *Designing Modern Germany*, there are oversights. For example, while the political history that so influenced design in the Nazi and postwar eras is given fair due, there



Left: Anton Stankowski, poster for the bank Kreissparkasse Esslingen-Nürtingen (1984). Right: Vierthaler, poster for the Entartete Kunst exhibition in Munich (1936).



COURTESY REAKTION BOOKS

is almost no discussion in the opening chapter of the formation of the German nation in 1871, and the implications this may have had on debates about the role of design in German culture. This would be the place to introduce the theme of the so-called "problem" of German national identity. Not only did this issue influence the development of

design culture during the so-called "foundation years" of the German nation, but it was almost always lingering beneath the surface of discussions about Germany's cultural production throughout the 20th century. It was also an important factor in the competing design cultures of East and West Germany, for example, **continued on page 30**

THE ARCHITECT'S NEWSPAPER SEPTEMBER 30, 2009

You Are Here

*Urban Design for an Urban Century:
Placemaking for People*
Lance Jay Brown, David Dixon,
and Oliver Gillham
Wiley, \$80.00

A precise definition of urban design is elusive, as it has been since the term's first articulation over 50 years ago at a Harvard GSD conference spearheaded by José Lluís Sert. Today the term, like sustainability, is battled about by architecture firms and the media, pointing toward an interpretation that favors architects and their super-sized projects. While practitioners of the quasi-discipline are typically seen to fall somewhere between planning's public policy and architecture's formal concerns, the urban designer's role in the process of development is often misunderstood and many times questioned. *Urban Design for an Urban Century* sets itself the task of clarifying the role of urban design in shaping urban places.

The book is the product of New York-based professor and practitioner Lance Jay Brown, David Dixon of Boston-based Goody Clancy, and the late architect and planner Oliver Gillham. The authors begin the book by acknowledging the ambiguity of the urban designer's job, determining that a shared emphasis on "finding the right fit between people and place" predominates. To illustrate this thread, they collect all 70 winning projects of the AIA Institute Honor Awards for regional

and urban design over the last ten years, commenting on these with respect to principles such as building community, advancing sustainability, expanding individual choices, enhancing public health, and making places for people.

Case studies are grouped into seven areas: regional growth, downtowns, older neighborhoods, new neighborhoods, waterfronts, the public realm, and campuses. It is clear from these divisions that one long-held purview of the urban designer, the public realm, is not the sole area of concern. Streetscapes and plazas and their accessory elements like furniture, signage, and trees are still addressed by urban designers, but so are land use, bulk, density, form, transportation, and ecology. Much of this expanded scope normally falls to planners and local jurisdictions, suggesting the urban designer's role in giving form to public policy and private development at an early stage. Chicago's award-winning Lakeshore East Master Plan by Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) is a fitting example of urban design's malleability. The plan is a guideline for future action by other actors, namely architects and their clients, following developed rules of land use, massing, and site coverage. Most notable among these is Studio Gang's 80-story Aqua Tower, a design marked by undulating terraces barely foreshadowed by SOM's Rockefeller Center-esque imagery.

Preceding the case studies and principles are an excellent, concise history of urban morphology and the decentralization of cities; a call for recentralization, echoing Sert's assertion for the same a half-century ago; and finally, the authors' crack at defining urban design. To that end Brown, Dixon, and

Gillham's definition outlines three characteristics: multidisciplinary collaboration, outreach to stakeholders, and the enhancement of economic, social, and environmental realms. These broad concerns insufficiently portray what an urban designer actually does, but a review of the case studies points to placemaking generated by buildings, particularly via their form, size, and style. But instead of falling prey to ever-popular form-based codes, the authors attempt to steer the reader away from aesthetics and toward sustainability, social equity, the health of the common realm, and other concerns.

Defining urban design is difficult primarily because the discipline has one foot planted in policy and the other rooted in physical form. The pull one way or the other depends upon the actual situation in which the urban designer works. Kevin Lynch's assertion, quoted in the first chapter, that urban design "comes down to the management of change" points us in the right direction. Attentive to the impact of policies on a diverse public and equally to design's role in placemaking, urban designers are able to synthesize the competing forces shaping cities today. Ideally, with an emphasis on process and change, many of the traditional concerns found here will give way to issues like questioning consumption's role in the social life of cities, and our relationship to nature and its processes. Brown, Dixon, and Gillham are aware of the need for social and ecological balance, but their admirable book-length explanation remains grounded in practice, as are the case studies that compensate in diversity for what they lack in vision.

JOHN HILL WRITES THE BLOG A DAILY DOSE OF ARCHITECTURE.

TEUTONIC TOME continued from page 29 as each was trying to claim ownership over German national identity, but also establish its own sense of "homeland" or *Heimat*. Likewise, the reunification of Germany—the attempt to establish a unified identity for the "Berlin Republic"—seems a clear influence on designs such as Eva Gronbach's fashion collection "My New Police Dress Uniform" (2004-5). Certainly, Aynsley acknowledges the influence of national identity, particularly with regard to Gronbach's designs, but given its presence as a leitmotif throughout, a more explicit discussion of this issue is a critical part of understanding design in modern Germany.

Despite this, *Designing Modern Germany* remains accessible and well-balanced, but also thorough. The text frequently cites important histories and historians of German design history, such as Joan Campbell and Paul Betts, allowing the reader insight into further study of specific areas of German design. Thus in the end, Aynsley's book is an excellent overview of one of the 20th century's more influential national design cultures, a perfect introductory text for anyone interested in the subject.

EMILY PUGH TEACHES ART HISTORY AND DESIGN AT THE PRATT INSTITUTE.

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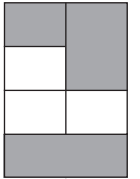
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